



THE INDEPENDENT

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(1R50p) 45p

**Tyson's return:
Fear and goading
in LA** REVIEW FRONT

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IN THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW + FASHION



Dobson refuses to close secure hospital taken over by inmates

THE DISASTROUS failure of a top-security mental hospital to control some of Britain's most dangerous criminals was revealed in a report yesterday which described how it became an outpost of the pornography industry.

Ashworth Hospital on Merseyside, which houses 456 mentally disordered patients including the Moors murderer Ian Brady, became a centre for the copying and distribution of hardcore porn in which an

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
COLIN BROWN AND
IAN BURRELL

new powers to allow the Secretary of State to sack NHS staff, and tougher controls over patients with personality disorders.

The nine-month £7.5m inquiry - triggered by allegations from Stephen Daggett, a convicted child abuser who absconded from the hospital in 1996 - found pornography was "widely available", security was "farical" and the whole unit "deeply flawed". The inquiry blamed the hospital's managers for being "secretive, out of touch and totally unable to control this large institution". The institution was dominated by "clever and manipulative" prisoners.

Mr Fallon - who said the whole system was "rotten" - concluded: "The hospital's negative, defensive and blame-riding culture is so deeply ingrained that we doubt even the most talented management team could turn it around. Ashworth Hospital should close at the earliest opportunity."

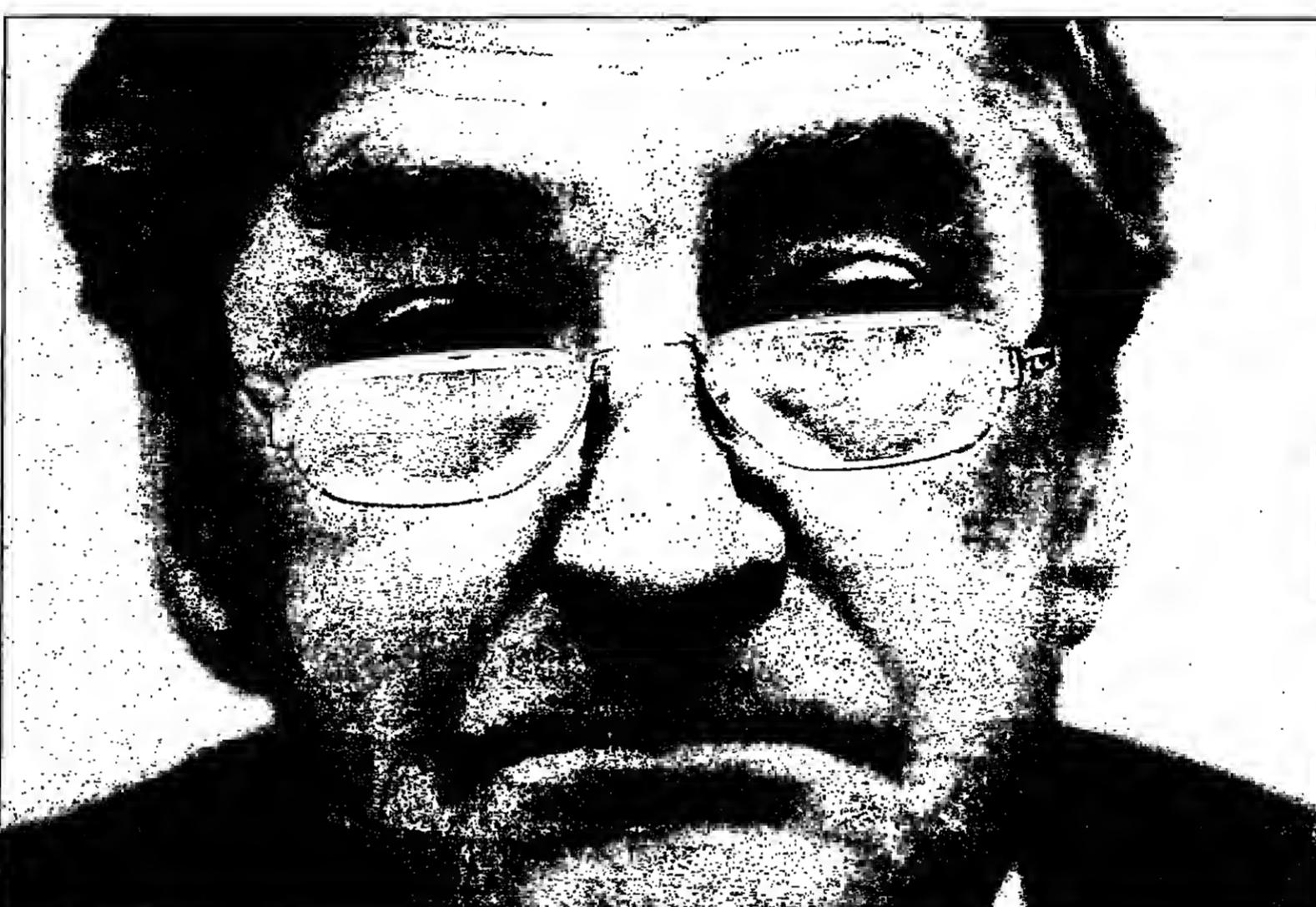
He said: "The management culture of the hospital was dysfunctional. Senior managers were secretive, out of touch and totally unable to control this large institution. We therefore have no confidence in the ability of Ashworth Hospital to flourish under any management. It should close."

But Mr Dobson told the Commons that the institution's problems were not those of "bricks and mortar" but of management and gave the hospital four months to turn itself round.

The first heads to roll yesterday were Paul Lever, chairman of the Ashworth Hospital Authority, and Anne Marie Nelson, former chairman of the Special Hospitals Service Au-

thority and chairman of the High Security Services Commissioning Board. Twenty three members of staff named in the report could be sacked or face professional disciplinary action. A former admiral in the Royal Navy, Ian Firnie, chairman of the Morecambe Bay health authority, was appointed to take over the authority.

It emerged, however, that Ashworth could be broken into smaller segregated units. The inquiry report, which included 55 recommendations, is also likely to lead to sweeping changes in the law, including



Peter Fallon whose recommendations for the closure of Ashworth hospital were rejected by Frank Dobson

Peter Macdiarmid

'A girl of eight was being groomed for paedophile purposes. Pornography was widely available; patients ran their own businesses; and security was farical. Ashworth Hospital should close at the earliest opportunity'

Peter Fallon QC, chairman of the inquiry

and have advocated wide-scale reform of what they called a "rotten" system.

Asked how he felt about Mr Dobson's decision, Mr Fallon would only say: "Frankly we disagree ... If Ashworth and other special hospitals continue to be structured and run as they currently are we envisage the problems will return."

The most disturbing part of Mr Fallon's report described how an eight-year-old girl was smuggled into the hospital for more than six years "weekend after weekend" by her own father, who is now prevented by a court order from contact with her. "The child at the centre of the paedophile allegations was, in our view, being groomed for

paedophile purposes. This is a disgraceful situation in what was supposed to be a hospital, and a high-security hospital at that," said the report.

Yesterday the Government secured a court order to protect the girl's anonymity. Mr Dobson told MPs: "I have checked. She seems to be doing pretty well. She is living a settled life."

The report found that drugs and pornographic videos were freely available; the father of the girl brought pornographic videos into the hospital; several patients had credit cards and were able to borrow large sums of money; and a machine for embossing share certificates was uncovered - leading to another inquiry which un-

covered "scams and money-making ventures in the personality disorder unit".

Members of the inquiry team were clearly disappointed with Mr Dobson's refusal to close Ashworth. They have recommended that patients with personality disorders are treated in smaller separate units away from other mentally ill people

FO asked hostages to report on Chechnya

THE FOUR engineers murdered in Chechnya had been asked by the Foreign Office to report back with sensitive information about "movers and shakers" in the rebellious Chechen republic.

Despite publicly claiming it had strongly advised the men's employers not to go to Chechnya, correspondence obtained by *The Independent* shows officials were keen to use the company to supply information on investment and politics.

BY ANDREW BUMCOMBE

In a Commons statement last December, Foreign Office minister Tony Lloyd said the advice to the employees, Granger Telecom and British Telecom, had been "unambiguous". However, in a letter written to Granger two months earlier, a Foreign Office official wrote: "As one of the very small number of British companies involved in Chechnya and having first-hand knowledge of Grozny

we would welcome your views on the potential for investment in Chechnya." It also requested information on contacts and

Checkens they considered influential. They also "finally" sought information on Jon James and Camilla Carr, two British kidnapped charity workers,

eventually released in September. The Foreign Office last night said it was only trying to secure the release of the charity workers. It refused to comment on whether any information obtained would be passed to the intelligence services.

The four engineers, Rudolf Petschi, Stanley Shaw, Darren Hickey and Peter Kennedy, were kidnapped in Grozny in October last year. Their bodies were found in December, apparently after being forced to

confess to spying. Last night opposition MPs demanded a full explanation. Shadow Foreign minister Cheryl Gillan said: "Tony Lloyd spoke about the advice to the company being unambiguous. It is clear that it was not unambiguous. The use of the words 'formal advice' implies the FO was saying 'don't go, but since you are there tell us what you can'." A Granger spokesman insisted the men had not been acting as spies. 'Name Checkens', page 4

Lawrence fury as police escape charges

ONLY ONE police officer is to face serious disciplinary charges for the hunged investigation into the murder of Stephen Lawrence, it was announced yesterday.

Four other senior Metropolitan Police officers who carried out the original inquiry into the killing of the 18-year-old black student would have faced similar charges, but they have all retired.

BY JASON BENNETT
Crime Correspondent

The serving officer, who faces a disciplinary tribunal into seven charges of neglect of duty, is due to retire this year. He is expected to be the only person to face a serious disciplinary punishment for the entire Lawrence débâcle.

The announcement was made in a report published by

the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) yesterday, which concluded that there was no evidence to prove that any officer "consciously discriminated" against Stephen's parents, Doreen and Neville Lawrence, during the investigation.

They reacted with anger and said: "The finding that there was no racism in the investigation is astonishing."

The PCA decision followed a damning report by Kent Police into the initial investigation by Scotland Yard of the stabbing death of Stephen by a white gang near a bus stop in Eltham, south-east London, in April 1993. It also examined the subsequent internal inquiry by the Metropolitan Police, which cleared their colleagues' work. Kent found a succession of blunders and incompetence.

In May last year the Lawrence public inquiry was told that Det Insp Bullock was given a damning professional appraisal by the senior officer who took over the murder investigation in July 1994.

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Gordon Brown has told Europe how Britain would enter the euro Home P2

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IN THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

'I know that whatever happens to me is related to my children's deaths. I have abandoned the idea that one day I will recover'

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH GENEVIEVE JURGENSEN, AUTHOR OF 'THE DISAPPEARANCE'

THE BEST WRITING, WEEK IN, WEEK OUT: DEBORAH ROSS, HOWARD JACOBSON, HAMISH MCRAE, MARK STEEL, ROBERT FISK, TERENCE BLACKER, JOHN WALSH, RICHARD WILLIAMS, DAVID AARONOVITCH, ANNE McELVOY, THOMAS STCLIFFE, MILES KINGTON, SUE ARNOLD, ANDREAS WHITTEAM SMITH

Brown spells out plans to join euro

BY ANDREW GRICE
AND DIANE COYLE

"should improve the flexibility of the economy, helping to ensure that the UK could maximise the benefits of the single currency".

The Chancellor told the Commission that "to ensure that membership is a genuine option, both public and private sectors are beginning to prepare for the single currency".

The document emphasised the importance of a stable exchange rate for the pound. "The Government is confident that the new arrangements provide the best platform to deliver greater stability in the sterling-euro exchange rate," it said. "Over time, it will allow the UK economic and interest rate cycle to move closer to that of the single currency area."

The fact that UK interest rates, at 6 per cent, are double those in the euro area is explained as a legacy of past volatility in the British economy.

Ministers said last night that Mr Brown's "convergence programme" was aimed at allowing Tony Blair to call a referendum on joining the euro shortly after the next general election. If Labour retains power, if an election were held in 2001, Britain could join by January 2002, when euro notes and coins start circulating.

However, cabinet sources said there was "an outside chance" of a referendum before the election after the euro's successful launch last week. "If the business community pushes hard, then the momentum may become unstoppable," one senior minister said.

John Redwood, the shadow industry secretary, said: "This document is part of the softening up process, designed to create the impression that joining the euro is inevitable. We think that is rubbish."

Mr Brown's document said the Government was pursuing a strategy "for achieving the stability and convergence" required for Britain to join. The traditional differences between the British economy and those of its EU partners "are becoming less distinct over time", it added.

The Government's policies



Fifty villagers from Lynmouth, Devon, yesterday re-enacting the events of 100 years ago when their ancestors manhandled a lifeboat 14 miles overland, to save the crew of the sailing ship 'Forrest Hall' founering in heavy seas in Portlock Bay. Tim Cuff

Mandelson 'wanted to oust Brown as Chancellor'

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

preparing for a move to the Treasury, the book claims.

Tony Blair was to move Mr Brown "reluctantly" to the Foreign Office before the general election, making room for Mr Mandelson to move from the Department of Trade and Industry to the Treasury, leaving him as the "air apparent" to take over from Mr Blair when he stepped down as Prime Minister.

The claims were treated sceptically at Westminster last night and dismissed as "fanciful and absurd" by Mr Mandelson's friends, but the new allegations undermine the extent to which the Government is

finding it difficult to refocus on policy, instead of the personal feuds across the Cabinet.

It was disclosed in *The Independent* yesterday that a powerful backbench campaign is being mounted against Mr Mandelson and today the Parliamentary Labour Party is expected to say at a meeting with the Prime Minister at Westminster that he should not bring back Mr Mandelson, at least until after the next election.

Paddy Ashdown and his party intend to embarrass the Government today with a debate deplored "politically partisan presentation, spin-doctoring, unattributed briefing and the pursuit of personal rivalries between ministers".

The agency laid the blame for the spill, Britain's second-worst tanker catastrophe, on the flawed rules, procedures and management of Milford Haven Port Authority, and on defects in the way it trained its maritime pilots.

Port to blame for tanker disaster

BY NICHOLAS SCHOON

February 1996. More than 20,000 sea birds are thought to have perished and 120 miles of coast was polluted. Local fisheries closed for months while tourism claims could be as high as £46m.

Michael Hill QC, counsel for the Environment Agency, told the court the port authority should not have allowed Mr Pearn to bring in such a large tanker without a second pilot.

The agency laid the blame for the spill, Britain's second-worst tanker catastrophe, on the flawed rules, procedures and management of Milford Haven Port Authority, and on defects in the way it trained its maritime pilots.

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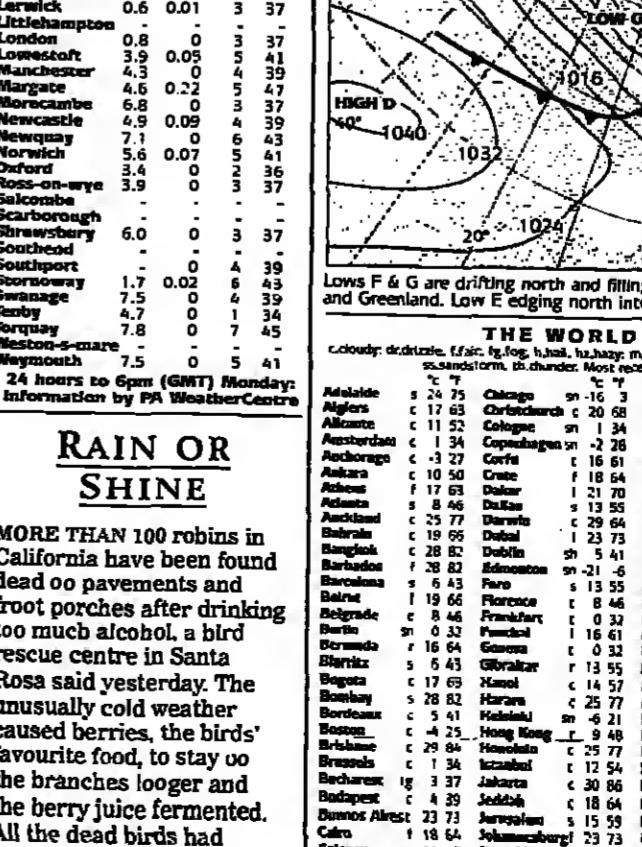
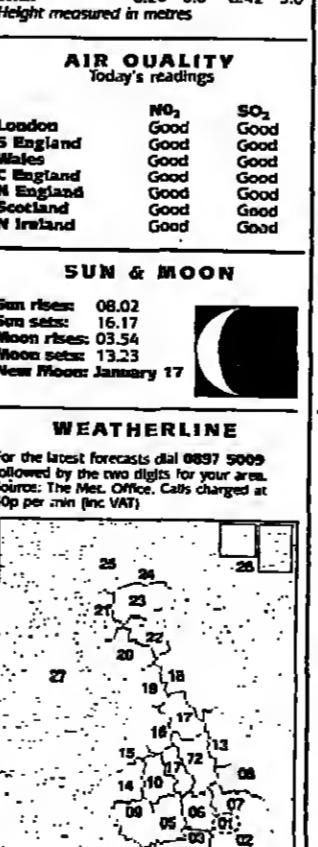
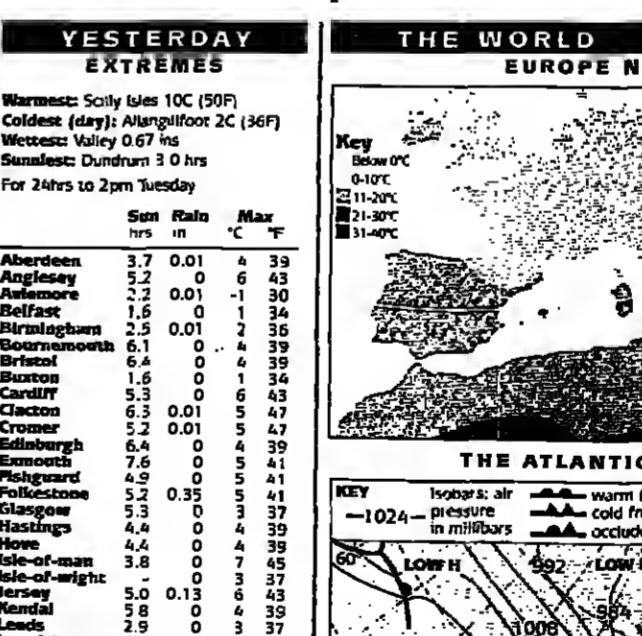
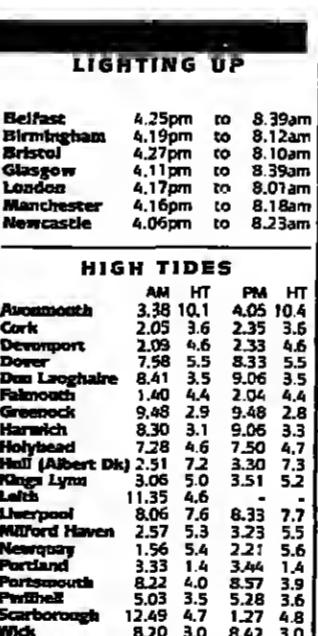
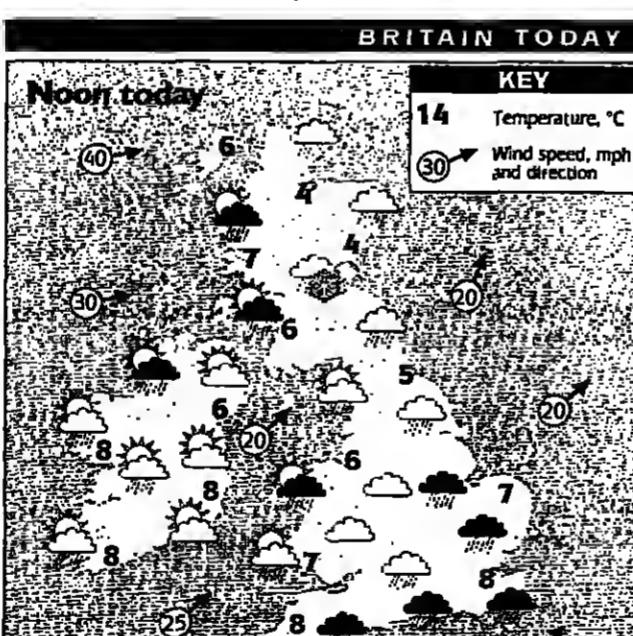
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Pinochet lawyers vetoed law lord

BY KIM SENGUPTA

LORD WOOLF, Master of the Rolls, will not be sitting on the rehearing of the Pinochet case after objections from the former Chilean dictator's lawyers. The *Independent* can reveal.

In an unprecedented and highly controversial move, the House of Lords has effectively given General Augusto Pinochet's lawyers the power of vetoing the new panel of judges who will hear the case from next Monday.

Lord Woolf is the second most senior jurist in England and Wales after the Lord Chief Justice, and would have been the most liberal of the seven judges who will rule whether General Pinochet has immunity from prosecution on charges of human rights abuse.

A decision by the previous panel that General Pinochet does not have immunity from prosecution was overturned by fellow law lords because of the failure by Lord Hoffmann to declare his links with Amnesty International, the human rights group that had lobbied for the former dictator to be charged.

Subsequently the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Laird, wrote to Lord Brown Wilkinson, the senior law lord, asking for the Lords to be more vigilant about not giving the appearance of bias.

The judicial office of the House of Lords had written to General Pinochet's solicitors, Kingsley Napley, mentioning Lord Woolf as a candidate for the new hearing. Lord Woolf stepped down from hosting a fund-raising dinner for Amnesty on 26 January, after being told he may be on the panel.

His name had been on a letter sent to law firms asking for donations for a building for Amnesty. Other signatories were Lord Irvine, the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham of Cornhill, and Lord Hoffmann. Kingsley Napley also received the letter and promised to donate £1,000.

Leeds'

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Early bird is key to global warming

BY MICHAEL McCARTHY
Environment Correspondent

THE GOVERNMENT is to monitor the arrival of the first swallow in spring to check on the progress of global warming.

It is one of 35 indicators which have been officially chosen to detect the initial signs of climate change.

Without needing to be prompted by the weekend's collapse of Beachy Head, which the Environment Agency said was climate change-induced, Government scientists have quietly started to monitor and bring together a mass of small and large events, both in the natural world and in society, which may be the first signs of a hotter planet.

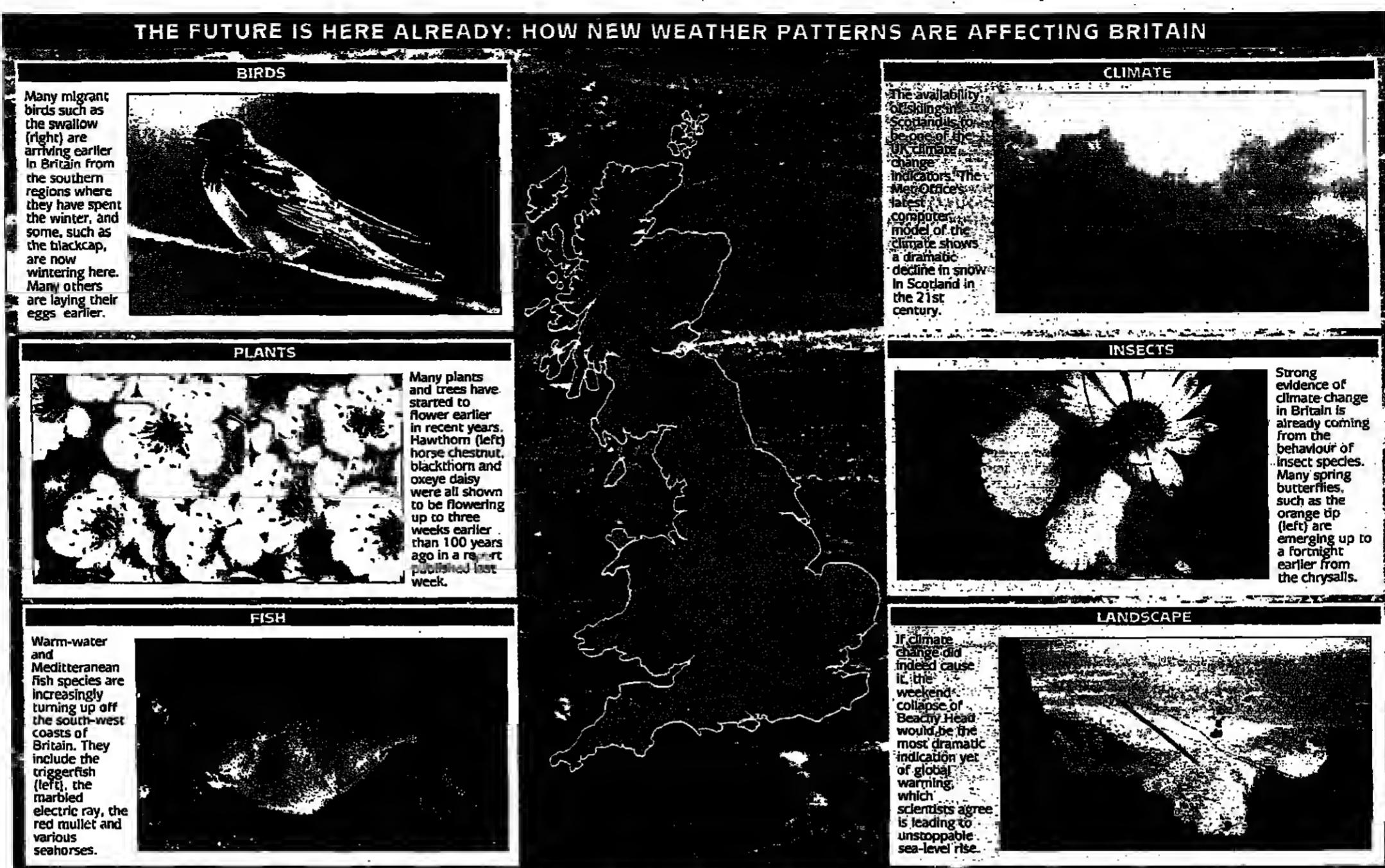
Some of these are already strongly suggesting that climate change is no longer a theoretical calamity predicted by the supercomputers of the Met Office, but is already with us.

The indicators they have chosen range from the arrival dates of swallows in spring and the leafing dates of oak trees, to the number of possible skiing days in Scotland, the number of insurance claims for "major weather perils" and the number of human cases of Lyme Disease, caused by a tick which flourishes in warmer weather.

The first indications, certainly from the evidence assembled about the behaviour of birds, plants and insects, is that the greenhouse effect is now here. Over the past twenty years many events in the natural world have started to take place much earlier in the spring, in a way entirely consistent with a warmer climate.

Much of this evidence is startling and when it is assembled, as the Government is doing, it is compelling. The orange tip butterfly, for example, is now emerging about 11 days earlier than it was 20 years ago. The leaves on oak trees at a monitored site in Surrey are emerging about three weeks earlier than when records began in 1947 and the swallow is arriving earlier at eight different bird observatories. Twenty species of birds have shifted their egg-laying dates an average of 8.8 days earlier in the 23-year period from 1971 to 1995.

The importance of the Government's new initiative to bring all this together is that for



the first time it puts official emphasis on monitoring, as well as prediction.

Until now most of the effort and funding in the fight to combat global warming - hundreds of millions of pounds - has gone into climate prediction. Scientists with complex computer models could happily tell you what was likely to happen in 50, 75 or 100 years, but were unable to tell you what was happening now, as noting that the egg-laying date of the chaffinch was weeks earlier than before

was regarded as a suitable occupation only for types in anoraks.

But official recognition has finally come of the fact that dramatic trends may suddenly emerge from large numbers of small observations, once they are plotted, and the need to observe the many minute changes which may be the first signs of a dramatically warmer world is now accepted.

The mass of information is being brought together in a single database, coordinated

by Professor Melvin Cannell of the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology in Edinburgh.

His unpublished pilot study, "Indicators of Climate Change in the UK," which is now being reviewed by officials at the Environment Department, contains an initial 35 indicators chosen to register global warming's effect. They begin with climate and temperature itself. Obvious measures such as the number of hot and cold days and the amount of rainfall are joined by subtler indicators like

soil moisture amounts, amounts of groundwater stored in chalk and the number of times a year the Thames Barrier is closed (an indicator of the rising sea-levels global warming is predicted to cause).

Social indicators include the value of annual domestic claims for subsidence (which increases in very hot dry summers), amount of gas consumed in winter, and the number of holidays taken within the UK. Agricultural indicators selected include areas of

vineyards in the UK, yields of non-irrigated potatoes and the amount of late summer hay yields.

These latter two categories are more likely to show changes once climate change is firmly established. But it is the changes in wildlife behaviour that are pointing to global warming's arrival already.

Two of the scientists helping coordinate the Government's data, Tim Sparks of the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology at Monk's Wood near Peterborough, and Humphrey Crick, of

the British Trust for Ornithology, gave remarkable information of their own on climate-related changes in plant life last week when they published the first report of their new monitoring network.

They compared the flowering of four different plants in 1998 with records made a century ago and found all to be much earlier.

Mr Sparks, who is an environmental statistician, holds a number of similar remarkable records not yet in the Govern-

ment database. He quotes the Hertfordshire Natural History Society, whose record of the dates of arrival of six migrant species of birds show the swallow is now arriving in Hertfordshire on about March 26 as against April 8 in the 1890s.

"All these records show changes in behaviour which is entirely consistent with a warmer climate," Tim Sparks said.

"Soon," said Humphrey Crick, "We shall be waiting for the first swallow of the winter."

Runaway foster parents plead to keep children

A COUPLE who disappeared with their two foster daughters after they were refused permission to adopt have written an emotional letter pleading to be allowed to keep them.

Jeff and Jennifer Bramley disappeared from their Cambridgeshire home in September with five-year-old Jade Bennett and her half-sister, three-year-old Hannah. In the handwritten letter, sent to Anglia Television, they ask police and social services to let them live together as a family. The letter was sent first class on 11 January and postmarked from Nottingham.

The family were last spotted by a retired vicar on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway between Pickering and Grosmont on 2 January.

BY KATE WATSON-SMITH

Although the letter was unsigned, police are taking it seriously because it contains information that only the Bramleys could know.

In the letter the couple said: "We Jeff, Jenny, Jade and Hannah write this letter to tell the plight of a family that love each other and wishes to stay together. Jade and Hannah were told about us and told we would be their forever Mummy and Daddy."

"After we had met the girls several times in their foster home, they came to live with us. They soon grew to love us as their Mummy and Daddy, as we grew to love them as our daughters. Jade and Hannah

were looking forward to their new lives with us."

The Bramleys said they were good, honest, caring people who were willing to give up their home, friends and jobs to keep the girls with the parents they love and desperately want to share their lives with.

"We were approved to be Jade and Hannah's new Mummy and Daddy, they were placed with us for us to adopt. It is misleading to call us foster parents.

"Social services seemed pleased with us and told us everything was fine until one day they said we were too safely conscious by saying 'no' and 'don't' too often.

"The children have been told that they are to move on to

another forever Mummy and Daddy." The couple claimed they had only been evaluated by one social worker, and given no chance to voice the children's own opinion.

"Jade and Hannah have cried saying they love us and don't want to live with anyone else and that if anyone comes to take them away they will hold on to us, not letting go." The letter ends with an appeal asking for help to adopt the girls.

"Jade and Hannah are two bright, intelligent, articulate children who love us with all their hearts. We ask therefore, will someone help us to be legally their Mummy and Daddy for ever, making the hopes and dreams of these two wonderful girls come true."

Artist is paid to discover the sweet scent of success

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

THE TRUE mark of celebrity will no longer be just having your likeness painted for the National Portrait Gallery. From today stars can have their "odour portraits" taken so that gallery-goers can experience the real smell of success.

The plan to have "wafting chambers" in art galleries might sound like a satire on the Turner Prize but it has, in fact, been officially funded to the tune of £12,500. Artist Clara Ursitti has won the grant to create "odour portraits" of the rich and famous. She is asking sports and showbiz celebrities to wear shirts impregnated with highly absorbent charcoal to pick up body scents.

These odour molecules will then be fed into a chemical analyser and the read-out will



A gallery-goer experiencing smelly art

enable scientists to re-create the celebrities' scent mix, which will then be pumped into smell chambers in art galleries so that visitors can wander in and take a sniff.

Dr Dodd, who ran the UK's first smell research group at the University of Warwick, said:

"We expect the scent of the sportsman will smell very strongly of truffles but for other

chemicals released by the body. We plan to open wafting chambers in galleries so that visitors can wander in and take a sniff."

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FO asked: 'Who are the key Chechens?'

CHECHNYA IS one of the few countries in the world considered too dangerous for foreign governments to work.

With the exception of one British-based charity - the Halo Trust - which works clearing landmines, the only current Western presence is the observers from the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). So when the engineers from Granger Telecom and British Telecom arrived in the capital Grozny last year they were a valuable commodity. From a purely economic point of view, the five-year deal to install a mobile phone network and satellite links, of which the men were part, was worth an estimated £150m to the Surrey-based firm.

At the time of the men's kidnap on October 4 last year, the company's chief executive Ray Worth was able to say: "We undertook the contract with the knowledge about the lack of se-

curity and considered the risks were worth the effort."

But the men were also a direct source of information about Chechnya, its leadership and investment prospects.

The Independent has learnt that Granger Telecom first met with officials from the Foreign Office in July last year. At the meeting in central London matters discussed included the nature of the work the company and its employees Darren Hickey, 26, Rudolf Petschi, 42, Stanley Shaw, 58 and self-employed BT contractor Peter Kennedy, 46, were carrying out.

The FO's official advice to the company and other Britons considering travelling to the Caucasus semi-autonomous republic, torn apart by an 18-month war with Russia, was clear: Don't go. But at the same time it was desperately trying to secure the release of two

Quaker-run charity workers, Camilla Carr and Jon James, taken hostage while working in Grozny in the summer of 1997.

It is now clear the FO wanted to use the engineers to gather information about the Carrs. In a letter to Granger from the FO's Eastern Division dated August 13, the desk officer wrote:

"As part of our efforts to secure the safe release of Camilla Carr and Jon James ... we have had frequent if so far relatively unproductive contacts with the Chechen leadership."

The letter restates what it calls its formal advice about not travelling to the country. But it continues: "As one of the very small number of British companies involved in Chechnya ... we would welcome your views on the potential for international investment in Chechnya."

It also asks for views on contacts considered to be the "movers and shakers" in Chechnya, adding: "Finally we

would also like to discuss the Carr and James case. Is there anything else that we might be doing to secure their release?"

Last night an FO spokesman defended its request to the company and said it was only trying to bring about the release of Mr James and Mr Carr.

"There is nothing wrong with this, we would have asked other companies as well," said a spokesman. "It is not spying." The spokesman refused to say whether information would have been passed to the security services.

On September 20, following an alleged bribe payment, Ms Carr and Mr James were released by the hostage-takers.

The four engineers were not to be so lucky. Within weeks of their arrival in Chechnya, they too were taken hostage. For two months there was little word on them and on December 8 their decapitated heads were discovered near the capital.



Refugees from the Chechen civil war. Above: Darren Hickey, Peter Kennedy, Rudolf Petschi and Stanley Shaw



IN BRIEF

McLibel Two begin appeal

THE McLIBEL Two, Helen Steel and Dave Morris, yesterday launched their appeal against a ruling in 1997 that they libelled McDonald's with a call for an overhaul of defamation laws. The two campaigners believe the fast-food chain should have lost the original trial because some criticisms had been proved. The hearing continues.

Police chief resigns over release

A SENIOR police officer who ordered an old friend's son to be released after being arrested for wife-beating, resigned yesterday. Chief Superintendent Iain Anderson, 49, announced his decision to retire from Strathclyde Police 24 hours after being summoned to explain his actions before Chief Constable John Orr.

Girl found hanging by school tie

A 13-YEAR-OLD girl was in hospital today after her mother found her hanging by her school tie. The girl, from Benchill, Wethersfield, in Greater Manchester, is in a serious condition. The incident comes just over a week after the death of eight-year-old Marie Bentham, who was found by her mother hanging by a skipping rope.

Silence on mortgage tax relief

THE HOUSING minister, Hilary Armstrong, refused yesterday to comment on media reports that the Urban Taskforce was set to recommend that people who own or buy homes built on greenfield land should lose mortgage tax relief.

Belfast remembers revered writer

THE ACCLAIMED Belfast-born author Brian Moore is being mourned in his home city after his death in the United States. The novelist, who retained strong links with the place of his birth through his books. He died on Sunday at his home near Los Angeles. He was 77.

SUE ARNOLD

Three thousand pounds does seem a lot of money for taking a few pills

IN THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW PAGE 4

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TV challenge 'could destroy football'

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EAS WHITAM SMITH
Pinochet lawyers
vetoed law lord

BY NICK HARRIS

PROMINENT TEAMS such as Charlton and Wimbledon, to negotiate television deals collectively. At present the League controls all rights, sales and overseas distribution of television income among its clubs. The current television deals to screen live league games and highlights – with Sky Television and the BBC, the League's two co-defendants in the case – are worth £743m over four years.

The OFT maintains that these deals are against the public interest, that clubs should make individual, not collective, television deals, and that the public should be given a broader choice of channels on which they can watch Premier League football. The OFT's central argument against the current position is that the League is operating as a cartel, which is stifling innovation and leading to high prices.

The hearing will cost the par-

ticipants involved up to £30m over its expected four-month duration. The outcome will be decided by a judge, Mr Justice Parris, and two lay officials.

Charles Aldous QC, representing the League, opened proceedings yesterday saying it was his client's right, as the governing body, to control centrally the sale of television rights. The League, he said, is controlled by its member clubs and acts in their interest. Should that right be acted collect-

ively on behalf of the clubs be removed, Mr Aldous added, equality of wealth distribution, both within the League and to the wider football family, would be threatened.

At present, Mr Aldous said, the Premier League gives some £17.5m a year to football clubs and causes outside its jurisdiction. It announced on Monday that it intends to increase that figure to up to £50m a year when its next television contracts are agreed before

2001. Should the OFT win, he added, not only would that funding be threatened, but Premier League clubs would be selected for takeovers by broadcasting companies pursuing business rather than sporting agendas.

Mr Aldous said that could lead to the break-up of the Premier League and hasten the formation of a breakaway European Superleague including only the most powerful clubs.

Jonathan Sumption QC, set-

ting out Sky's position as a defendant, said the company would argue that it is legitimate and desirable for a single broadcaster to have, for a limited time, exclusive rights to screen sports events, as long as such rights were regularly renegotiated and sold in a fair and open manner. Mr Sumption added that Sky is not alone in signing exclusive rights for live football. Manchester United, for example, will appear more times on ITV in the European

Champions League this season than on Sky.

Christopher Carr QC, representing the BBC, said the corporation was currently able to make a comprehensive highlights programme such as *Match of the Day* only because the League sells rights collectively, and said it will argue that the current contracts are in the public interest.

The case continues today when the OFT will outline the main arguments of its case.



The Sheridans' isolated cottage near Upwell, Norfolk

Police hunt callous killer in Fenland of PD James

BY KATHY MARKS

EVEN ON the most elemental of days, the Fens are a bleak and brooding place. Yesterday, lashed by wind and rain, a heavy sky pressing down on fields turned grey by an overnight dusting of snow, they offered a vista of unrelied desolation.

The landscape, flat as a billiard table, crisscrossed by rivers and dykes, is familiar to fans of the crime novelist P D James. At present, though, it is a real-life murder mystery that is being played out in this inhospitable corner of East Anglia.

Police announced yesterday that they had launched a full-scale murder investigation into the deaths of Janice Sheridan, a 45-year-old dog breeder, and her 89-year-old mother, Constance.

The two women lived together quietly outside the Norfolk village of Upwell, near Wisbech. On Sunday, they were found dead in the living room of their isolated cottage, stabbed many times, in what detectives called a "callous and ruthless" attack.

At a press conference yes-



Police guard the road to Pingle Bridge, a track leading to the cottage in Norfolk where the bodies of Janice and Constance Sheridan were found

Brian Harris

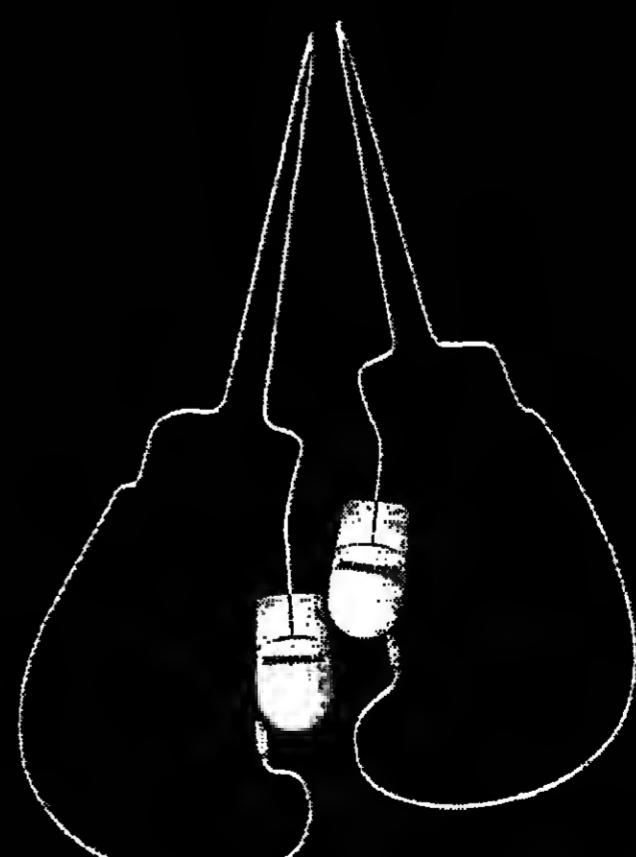
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The McQueen dress that he was accused of copying

summer haute couture collection is to be shown this weekend, said: "I was determined to prove that accusations of this nature will not be tolerated."

McQueen, whose spring/



Payout for McQueen over plagiarism libel

BY SUSANNAH FRANKEL
Fashion Editor

ALEXANDER MCQUEEN and Givenchy, the fashion house where he is chief designer, accepted substantial libel damages yesterday over claims of plagiarism from the London listings magazine *Time Out*.

The magazine had carried false allegations by fashion students that McQueen had copied their designs. One of the dresses in question was a white, one-shouldered toga dress first shown at McQueen's debut haute couture show for Givenchy in January 1997.

A spokesperson for McQueen said that Trevor Merrell, 36, a former student of the London College of Fashion, first made contact about 18 months ago, claiming that the dress was a copy of one of his

own designs. Six months later, *Time Out* got hold of another student's story, alleging that one of her fabric designs had been plagiarised by McQueen.

"This sort of allegation is not uncommon," said the McQueen spokesperson. "It took an awful lot of time and energy to deal with these particular claims, which initially we saw as nothing more than annoying. Having taken advice from our lawyers at Givenchy, however, we decided that if we took a stand on this particular occasion it would stop other people from trying it on in the future."

The action by Givenchy follows a series of allegations of

plagiarism in fashion. Breach of copyright in fashion depends on whether the substance of a garment has been copied rather than just the idea behind it.

In 1993 the London-based design duo Antoni & Alison received an out-of-court settlement for undisclosed damages from Giorgio Armani who, they alleged, had produced a T-shirt bearing a logo too close to one of their own designs. In 1994, Ralph Lauren paid £250,000 damages to Yves Saint Laurent for copyright infringement of a black tuxedo evening sheath. Equally high-profile was Liza Bruce's attempt to sue Marks & Spencer over a swimwear design. The designer's legal costs put her out of business.

McQueen, whose spring/

summer haute couture collection is to be shown this weekend, said: "I was determined to prove that accusations of this nature will not be tolerated."

Ted Hughes wins Whitbread prize

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

THE LATE POET laureate Ted Hughes received his second posthumous award in as many days yesterday. His collection of poems about his relationship with Sylvia Plath, *Birthday Letters*, won the 1998 Whitbread Poetry Award only 24 hours after it won the T S Eliot Prize.

In two weeks' time Hughes' book could win the £21,000 Whitbread Book of the Year prize,

suicide, could have led him into. His account of that relationship seems hewn from granite."

The winner of the award for best novel was Justin Cartwright, a television documentary maker, for his book *Leading The Cheers*, in which an unemployed man returns to small-town America after living in London and begins to rediscover and question his past life.

First novel winner was Giles Foden for *The Last King Of Scotland*. The book traces Idi Amin's eight-year dictatorship of Uganda from the fictional perspective of a young Scottish doctor appointed Amin's personal physician.

Amanda Foreman's biography, *Georgiana, Duchess Of Devonshire*, won the biography award.

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Fallon inquiry: Management blamed for 'therapeutic nihilism' that allowed unit to become awash with hard-core porn

Ashworth run by inmates not staff



Ashworth hospital: Child played with sex offender

A TELEPHONE call from Dirty Harry's bar in Amsterdam in September 1996 triggered the Ashworth inquiry that reported yesterday. On the line was Stephen Daggett, a convicted paedophile and Ashworth inmate who had absconded days earlier while on a shopping trip to Liverpool. What he had to say lifted the lid on one of the worst scandals to engulf the top-security mental hospital in its 100-year history.

Daggett, 38, claimed the hospital was awash with pornographic literature and videos that inmates had a ready supply of drugs and alcohol.



Stephen Daggett: Phone call triggered inquiry

and, most damning of all, that an eight-year-old girl had made regular visits and been allowed to play in a garden next to a ward, with a patient convicted of sex offences against children.

Daggett, who spent 12 years in Ashworth after being convicted of three indecent assaults against young girls, promised to return to the hospital on one condition - that his claims would be investigated. He had absconded, he said, because it was the only way of drawing attention to a situation that had been ignored by the hospital authorities.

While on the trip to Liverpool - part of his rehabilitation pro-

gramme - he had managed to withdraw £1,500 from his building society account and then given the nurse escorting him, Jim Corrigan, the slip.

Daggett was picked up in Canterbury and returned to Ashworth on 7 October. He set about producing an account of his claims entitled "My Concerns". The hospital authorities dismissed his version of events.

It was only when Alice Mahon, the Labour MP whose constituents in Halifax include Daggett's parents, produced a 60-page dossier based on his account that ministers took notice.

The allegations related to the Personality Disorder Unit, a block of five locked wards that housed some of the most intractable cases at Ashworth. By common consent among psychiatrists, offenders with personality disorders are the hardest, if not impossible, to treat. This "therapeutic nihilism" fostered a policy of containment rather than treatment - and what emerged was that the unit was effectively run by its 115 inmates rather than the staff.

As ministerial anxiety about Ashworth grew, in the light of Alice Mahon's claims, a raid was ordered on Lawrence ward, part of the Personality Disorder Unit, on 17 January 1997. What it disclosed beggared belief. One of Britain's three top security mental hospitals, housing some of the most dangerous offenders in the land, had become a centre for the circulation of hard-core pornography.

In the ward shop, 41 hardcore porn videos were on sale. More than 800 other videos were found on the ward, 700 of which had been recently wiped or carried traces of pornographic recording. Some of the videos depicted bestiality, sadomasochism and child abuse and video machines were used to copy the tapes. One patient's room was found to contain 226 videos alone. Some of the ma-



Peter Fallon: Recommends Ashworth should close after finding senior managers 'totally unable to control the institution' Peter Macdiarmid

AGENDA FOR CHANGE

ASHWORTH has been given four months to develop an action plan to implement urgent changes.

- Four NHS employees named in Fallon report and still employed at Ashworth are to be disciplined.
- Arrangements for dealing with people with personality disorders to be reviewed.

- £4.5m to be invested in improved security at Ashworth, including x-rays, metal detectors and sniffer dogs, and a further £1.5m for extra security staff at all three special hospitals.
- Visits by children other than relatives of patients banned since September 1998.
- Social Services Inspectorate to conduct inquiries into social work aspects at the three special hospitals.

purposes" although there was no evidence she was abused. She had access to one patient, Peter Hemming, who had a history of molesting young girls including indecent assault and attempted rape; she also visited another, Paul Corrigan, who had kidnapped, tortured, sexually assaulted, mutilated and murdered a 13-year-old boy.

A few days later, on 7 Feb-

ruary 1997, Stephen Dorrell, the then health secretary, announced the inquiry into Ashworth under judge Peter Fallon, which was published yesterday. Five members of staff were suspended, including the chief executive, James Miles. She resigned in July 1997 after being cleared by an internal inquiry. Her successor, Dr Hilary Hodge, resigned a year later, in

July 1998, after senior doctors expressed "grave concerns" about her management style.

The history of the scandal-tinted hospital had brought many to the view that it was beyond rescue, long before yesterday's recommendation by the Fallon inquiry that it should close. Ashworth, Broadmoor and Rampton, Britain's three top-security mental hospitals, have

been criticised for more than a decade for being too big, too crowded and too isolated, professionally and geographically.

Sir Louis Blom Cooper, the distinguished QC who chaired an inquiry into Ashworth in 1992 that uncovered evidence of a brutal, dehumanising regime, said yesterday the hospitals were "unmanageable" and the Government should have begun dismantling them years ago. He had found a penal, oppressive regime dominated by the Prison Officers' Association, to which most of the nurses belonged.

Speaking on BBC radio, he said: "They are much too big... [and] they carry around the terrible legacy of the criminal lunatic asylum... they never actually got rid of the idea that they were partly a prison."

Mind, the mental health charity, echoed his views. "We want a national network of smaller, more manageable

TROUBLED HISTORY

THE FIRST hospital appeared on the Ashworth site in 1878 - a convalescent home, Moss Side House, for children from Liverpool workhouses.

By 1914, the hospital had been taken over by the Red Cross and established a reputation for treating shell-shocked soldiers from the Great War. Moss Side became a special hospital in 1933. In the 1970s, overcrowding at Broadmoor resulted in further expansion and the construction of Park Lane Special Hospital on land at the facility.

Park Lane opened in 1974 and was gradually expanded until 1984 into a high-security psychiatric facility operating independently of Moss Side. In 1989, the two hospitals were amalgamated to become Ashworth Hospital. Patients include the Moors murderer Ian Brady.

In March 1991, a television documentary alleged that a patient had died after being beaten by staff. A government inquiry led to a major shake-up.

In 1996, the convicted paedophile Stephen Daggett escaped from the hospital in what he said was a protest against his treatment in the hospital's Personality Disorder Unit. He compiled a dossier of claims that led to the new inquiry being ordered.

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Inspectors criticise regimes at Britain's top-security sites

BY JEREMY LAURANCE

SINCE 1980, Britain's three top-security mental hospitals have been subject to critical reports. There have been two for each institution, Broadmoor in Berkshire, Rampton in Nottinghamshire and Ashworth in Merseyside.

Broadmoor, which was founded in 1863, holds 443 patients at a cost of £93,000 a year, including Peter Sutcliffe, the Yorkshire Ripper.

In 1983 the Health Advisory Service and Social Security Inspectorate said "time was running out for a hospital largely without direction displaying all the faults of a total custodial institution and housed in grim Victorian buildings". That was followed in 1993 by an inquiry



into the death of Orville Blackwood and two other black patients at Broadmoor.

Rampton was founded in 1912, and holds 443 patients at a cost of £96,000 a year, including nurse Beverly Allitt.

ed in 1933, holds 456 patients at a cost each of £16,000 a year, including the Moors murderer, Ian Brady. In 1992, a report by Sir Louis Blom Cooper uncovered a "brutalising regime" in which patients were abused and humiliated by staff.

The Government ordered an internal review of high security care by Dr John Reed. Published in July 1994, it recommended a cut in the size of the special hospitals and the transfer of patients to smaller units. Ministers shelved the main recommendations.

Yesterday a report by Peter Fallon said senior managers were "totally unable to control the institution" and it should close. It was reprieved by Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health.

Alert over 'impoverished' jail

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

grammes to treat sex offenders, despite containing a large number of such criminals.

The jail's health centre was described as "the unkindest and dirtiest that inspectors had seen anywhere", although it employed eight cleaners. Prisoners in the health centre were given their last meal of the day at 3.45pm.

Sir David said: "I hope that this report will be read with some concern by ministers and Prison Service headquarters because it is yet another gross

ly overcrowded 'local' prison in which the treatment and conditions of prisoners fall far below the acceptable."

He said that 75 per cent of the prisoners at Birmingham had been sentenced, so they should not have been in a local prison. Up to 700 were unemployed and spent nearly all day locked in cells.

Prison officers were overstretched because when a prisoner was transferred for treatment at an outside hospital, six officers, working in pairs on eight-hour shifts, were required to give 24-hour cover.

Sir David reported: "One prisoner has now been on such a watch for over five months. I dread to think what is the cost of six officers a day for over 150 days."

The director-general of the Prison Service, Richard Tilt, said: "I recognise the fact that Birmingham prison currently holds more inmates than it would in an ideal world. However, as a local prison, Birmingham has a duty to accept into custody all those committed to it by the courts in its catchment area."

He said the prison had recently asked for further funding, which would finance a sex-offender programme.

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Railway round-up rouses Prescott from his holiday blues

JOHN PRESCOTT looked bored and fed up during most of Transport and Environment questions yesterday.

Making his first Commons appearance since his suggestion of a new power axis with Gordon Brown, he seemed unusually preoccupied. Rather more overweight than usual, he looked as though the festive indulgence had taken its toll. Maybe he was trying to diet, which might have accounted for his unwillingness to react, or perhaps, now the boss is back from the Seychelles, he misses being in charge.

The recess was an enjoyable experience for the Deputy Prime Minister to run the show and live it up in the official residence at Dorneywood, while giving a series of interviews hinting that Old Labour would be taking over in the wake of Peter Mandelson's resignation. In the Chamber, Mr Prescott can usually be goaded into a rage. He mutters incessantly, even when Tories attack him indirectly. Not today.

Bernard Jenkin, a Tory front-bencher, asked Richard Caborn, a junior minister, about favouritism in Mr Prescott's constituency over Government road projects.

Mr Jenkin was suggesting Mr Prescott has double standards, proclaiming him to be anti-car

everywhere, except in Hull. The Deputy Prime Minister stirred briefly, but could not even be bothered to shout his usual obscenities from his seated position.

Evan Rosse Winterton (Lab, Doncaster Central) asking a potty question about the role of buses failed to ignite him. At the mention of buses he usually waxes lyrical, but on this occasion he mumbled something about more people being able to use low-floor buses.

Richard Ottaway, another Tory, asked if Mr Prescott would resign if the Jubilee Line Extension was not open in time for the Millennium. "It will be," Mr Prescott snapped.

THE SKETCH



MICHAEL BROWN

If there were delays they would be sorted out but the problems were "all the Tories' fault" anyway.

Only when we got to railways did Mr Prescott rouse himself like a lazy lion to play his favourite game of Fat Controller. Mr Prescott gets it both ways with trains.

If any MP takes him to task about the ghastly services, he blames it all on the Tories and privatisation. If anything is going well, it is, he says, only because he is putting more money into trains. He got momentarily excited when it came to discussion of the Strategic Rail Authority which, according to him, will solve all the ills of privatisation. But there was Tory mockery when he declared that there would be a "rail summit" on 23 February.

Mr Prescott did his best, without enthusiasm, to bluster his way through rail questions with a series of statistics: "300 new drivers; 500 new rolling stock vehicles." Now that he has become respectable, responsible and very important, there are fewer examples of the old Prescott, where anger and rage were his hallmarks.

We did get one example of a Prescott howler however: when he talked of a "crash programme to find new drivers".

With Mr Prescott largely taking a back seat yesterday, it was left to the formidable Transport Select Committee chairman, Gwyneth Dunwoody, to provide us with the cabaret act as she described the latest horrors of travelling on Richard Branson's Virgin Trains.

Mrs Dunwoody reported that in her area there are no printed timetables available to passengers and suggested that this was probably just as well because since, as no trains run on time anyway, passengers might as well guess what time trains arrive and depart.

Forget rail summits, Mr Prescott: put Mrs Dunwoody in charge of your authority and Mr Branson and his ilk won't have a prayer before her formidable powers of rage and persuasion.

Payout after 15 years for GCHQ staff

TRADE UNION RIGHTS
BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter



tributes, saying: "This finally closes a sorry chapter in British history. Robin Cook deserves great credit for righting this wrong."

John Sheldon, the general secretary of the Council of Civil Service Unions, said: "Compensating those trade unionists dismissed from GCHQ for the loss of their pension rights is the final step necessary to remedy the wrong done in January 1984. The announcement ensures that those brave trade unionists who stood out against the actions of the previous government even to the point of dismissal will not now suffer in their retirement as a consequence."

Mr Cook said his decision reflected the principled stand taken by the 14 after Margaret Thatcher banned union rights at GCHQ in Cheltenham in 1984 when she was prime minister.

The announcement marks an end to a campaign that has become a cause célèbre in the Government's relations with trade unions.

The Foreign Secretary said the issue had been one of his priorities since he took office in May 1997 because the policy by the Thatcher government had been "wrong" and the 14 should not be "suffering" in their retirement because they had "stuck to their principles".

"The essential point for me and for the trade unions was whether we could distinguish between the 14 who were dismissed and others who left GCHQ. We are both now satisfied that a distinction can be made on behalf of those who took their principled stand," he added.

The amount of their compensation will depend on how long each of the 14 was serving at GCHQ and what grade they

Cook: Decision reflected the 'principled stand'

held. According to sources, three of the 14 were reinstated in government service, seven were past retirement age and the pension benefits of one had been brought forward on health grounds.

But they have accepted the terms of Mr Cook's decision and are said to be "delighted" that finally an end had been put to a "clear wrong" by the government of the time.

The ban was imposed at the height of Mrs Thatcher's battle against the trade unions during the mid 1980s. She claimed that civil servants' membership of the trade unions posed a "conflict of interest" with loyalty to the state, and that industrial action during the 1981 civil service pay strike had compromised the country's security.

Seven thousand staff were subsequently offered £1,000 each in compensation and the 14 were eventually sacked for refusing to leave their union.

John Monks, the TUC general secretary, led trade unionists in a separate statement that the 14 "took a brave stand in the 1980s against a policy that was wrong."

"This agreement means that they'll no suffer in their retirement for sticking to their principles," he added.

Sir David Gore-Booth, former ambassador to Saudi Arabia, outside his London home yesterday Andrew Stuart

Diplomat 'behaved like Waugh'

A SENIOR diplomat behaved like someone "out of Evelyn Waugh" when he responded to a Briton's complaint by firing off an angry letter to the man's boss, a Commons select committee was told yesterday.

Sir David Gore-Booth, the former ambassador to Saudi Arabia, was heavily criticised in an ombudsman's report after Paul Surtees, a British Aero-

DIPLOMACY

BY FRAN ABRAMS
Westminster Correspondent

space employee in the country complained about the consular service. In it, Sir David referred to Mr Surtees as "one of yours".

Rhodri Morgan, the Labour chairman of the committee, told Sir David: "That comes straight out of Evelyn Waugh and I find it extremely disturbing."

Sir David replied: "I have made it the business of my career not to act like Evelyn

Waugh." Sir David said Mr Surtees was working on the £20bn al-Yamamah arms contract on behalf of the Government, so he had a right to pass comment.

Sir John Kerr, the head of the diplomatic service, said that the incident was "disgraceful". Ambassadors had been issued with guidelines, telling them to keep any complaints confidential, he added.

THE HOUSE



Fraud tally

BENEFIT FRAUD is so prevalent that Sir John Bourn, the comptroller and auditor general, qualified the National Insurance fund's accounts for the 12th year running. Sir John said fraud in the payment of Jobseeker's allowance amounted to £46.9m in 1997-98 and that misuse of giro and order books could add up to a further £64m.

Crony claims

THE GOVERNMENT ran into claims of "cronyism" as it announced the membership of its panel on the future of BBC funding. The Funding Review Panel will be chaired by one of Gordon Brown's closest economic advisers, Gavyn Davies, chief international economist at Goldman Sachs.

Business today

Commons: Debates on pay for nurses; future of the Post Office; Cabinet Office questions. Prime Minister's questions. Debate on Government information and Britain's role in Europe. Lords: Debates on prevention of HIV/Aids in sub-Saharan Africa; increased time for leisure activities; disciplinary procedures for hospital doctors.

Labour hit by 'jobs for the boys' outcry

MINISTERS FACED renewed claims of Labour sleaze in town halls yesterday after allegations of a "jobs for the boys" scandal at a Midlands council.

Gillian Shepherd, shadow Environment Secretary, called on John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, to investigate after a senior Labour councillor in Walsall claimed that he had been asked by Unison officials to find jobs for Labour party members threatened with redundancy.

Graham Walker, who has since quit the party, said union officials made clear there was a long-standing agreement that Labour supporters' jobs would be saved in budget cuts.

"They were saying co-operatively in finding jobs for these people or all hell will break loose," he said.

Two Unison officials were allegedly caught on tape asking the councillor to spare five staff

executive after Mr Surtees complained about the consular service. In it, Sir David referred to Mr Surtees as "one of yours".

Rhodri Morgan, the Labour chairman of the committee, told Sir David: "That comes straight out of Evelyn Waugh and I find it extremely disturbing."

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Sir John Kerr, the head of the diplomatic service, said that the incident was "disgraceful". Ambassadors had been issued with guidelines, telling them to keep any complaints confidential, he added.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

New peer gets Pinochet role

THE CHARMAN of the BSE inquiry, Sir Nicholas Phillips, has been given a new law lord. Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers will be one of the seven peers who will hear the fresh appeal by former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet against moves to extradite him to Spain. He becomes a law lord on the retirement of Lord Lloyd of Berwick.

Smoking survey

PEERS WILL be surveyed whether there should be a smoking ban in the public rooms and corridors of the Lords. Liberal Democrat Lord Avebury said because of the dangers of passive smoking a ban would be "ideal and show an example".

to meet high standards of service on everything from dustbin collection to meals on wheels.

Councils will have to meet performance targets and subject panels to scrutiny by the local electorate. They will be inspected by the Audit Commission to ensure they are providing value for money compared with similar authorities.

Hilary Armstrong, the Local Government minister, said the Bill would ensure competition between the public and private sector. Councils would be obliged to strive for continuous improvement in services, a contrast to the Tory regime, which led to "minimum quality at minimum cost by minimalist providers", she said.

Mr Jenkins, a Tory environment spokesman, said: "This Bill is an invitation to cronyism of the worst kind that we see endemic in so many Labour councils."

Register of nannies to be voluntary

CHILD CARE POLICY

BY LOUISE JURY

THE GOVERNMENT rejected calls for a national register of nannies yesterday, saying such a move would be a "bureaucratic nightmare".

The decision was attacked by childcare experts who say the Government's alternative - a voluntary register of nanny agencies - will not ensure young children are protected.

Under the scheme agencies that introduced extra checks on potential employees would be given a government "kite mark" of approval.

for new regulations follows cases where children have been harmed by professional carers. Other measures include the establishment of a Criminal Records Bureau to make police checks easier.

Louise Davis, principal of the Norland College in Berkshire, which trains nannies, dismissed arguments that a compulsory register would be cumbersome. She said: "It would be no bigger than the register of general nurses." There also needed to be na-

tionally recognised training standards.

Cheryl Winton, founder of Playpen, a lobbying group on children's safety, said making the regulatory system voluntary would still leave less scrupulous agencies free to operate. Caroline Abrahams, head of public policy for the charity NCH Action for Children, said childcare involved a constantly shifting population, often of young women, which would be difficult to monitor. Deborah Orr, Review page 5

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ay blues

Dunwoody, to provide us with cabaret acts as she described her horrors of travelling on Branson's Virgin Train. Mrs Dunwoody reported that there are no timetables available to passengers and suggested that this was probably just as well because there are no trains run on time anyway. Passengers might as well guess what time trains arrive and depart.

Forget rail summed up Prescott: put Mrs Dunwoody in charge of your authority and Branson and his ilk won't have a prayer before her formidable powers of rage and persuasion.

Minister calls trains Summit

TRANSPORT
BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

RAIL PASSENGERS were angered by delayed standards of service available to complain period leaders of the rail industry summit next month, it was announced yesterday.

John Prescott, Transport Minister, said in Stratford on 15 February to start a long-term improvement of standards across the network.

As a continuing pre-

dictive to the performance

of companies and Rail

Net will seek to de-

mand immediate

improvement.

The move follows

a recent meeting be-

tween Mr

Prescott and the train

industry when they pledged

to introduce new drive

strategies.

A spokesman for a

department of the Envi-

ronment and the Rail

and Road

ministry was delighted

with the announcement.

Mr

Prescott's an-

nouncement at yesterday's

MPs

gathered

in London to discuss

the future of the rail

network.

Mr

Prescott said:

"I am encouraged

by the range

of measures

announced

today.

QUESTION

AND

ANSWERS

New peer gets

Pinochet role

QUESTION

AND

ANSWERS

Smoking sur-

geons will be able

to ban smoking in

public places and

make it illegal to

smoke in public

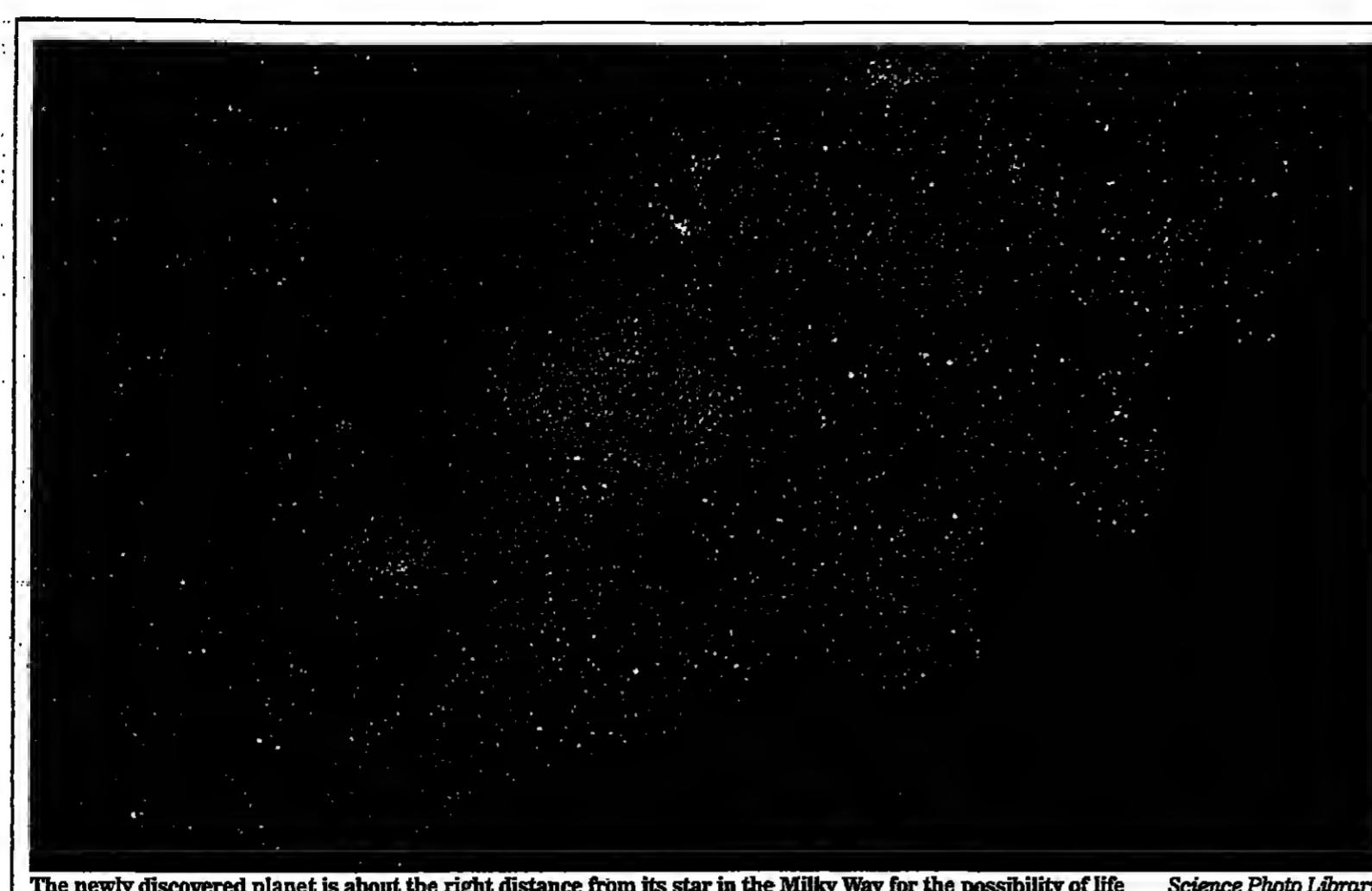
places.

QUESTION

AND

ANSWERS

voluntar-



The newly discovered planet is about the right distance from its star in the Milky Way for the possibility of life. Science Photo Library

Milky Way planet may support life

AN INTERNATIONAL team of scientists has discovered an Earth-sized planet in the middle of the Milky Way that may support life, according to one of the researchers.

It is the most promising candidate of 17 "extrasolar" planets discovered by various techniques over the past few years. Most of those are gas giants like Jupiter, or else too remote from a star to have any chance of supporting life. The new planet appears to be both the right size and distance to give life a chance.

Ian Bond, of Auckland University, said the new planet, which lies about 30,000 light years away, would probably be a little bit heavier than the Earth. "It has a probable mass range between that of the Earth and that of the planet Neptune [which has 17 times the Earth's mass]."

No pictures exist of the distant planet, which was detect-

ed last July by the team of Mount John Observatory on New Zealand's South Island with Japanese, American and Australian astronomers.

Crucially, the new planet is about the right distance from its star to sustain life, if it contains the correct mixture of elements. The distance from the Earth to the Sun (83 million miles) is defined as one "astronomical unit", or AU.

Mr Bond said the so-far unnamed planet "will be something like between one to four astronomical units, which places it in a promising region".

The planet was discovered using a relatively new technique called gravitational microlensing, which employs supersensitive equipment to detect a dark object's movement in front of a far more distant star. "This is the first

discovery using the microlensing technique. It's the only technique that is sensitive to Earth-size planets," Mr Bond said.

The microlensing method's power is not sufficient, however, to help scientists to tell whether there is any water or other elements thought of as essential to life, for example.

Most of the extrasolar planets discovered so far have been detected because they are so massive that they induce a "wobble" in the motion of their parent star as they orbit around it.

However, such planets are unlikely candidates to support life because of their enormous surface gravities, widely varying temperatures and the preponderance of elemental gases in their atmospheres. Gravitational microlensing, by comparison, can detect much smaller planets at greater distances.

Habitual burglars get three years' jail

BY JASON BENNETT
Crime Correspondent

ment alongside details of a £50m investment in burglary prevention schemes.

It emerged that the Prison Service knew about the decision only a few days ago. A series of emergency meetings was held at the Home Office on Monday.

Mr Straw denied he was returning to the Tory policy of "Prison Works", saying he had created a "sensible and balanced" programme combining prevention and punishment.

"This is the only effective way to reduce crime. Our approach to burglary makes it clear that we will both punish persistent burglars and act to prevent burglary in the first place," he said. Minimum jail terms would even out inconsistencies in sentencing across the country, he added.

The move immediately drew criticism from the opposition, with the Conservatives saying the Government was simply accepting Tory measures.

The Liberal Democrats warned that the fight against crime would be hampered by a drop in police numbers.

The three-year mandatory sentence was described as "a bombshell" by the Prison Reform Trust. Stephen Shaw, director, said mandatory penalties were "wrong in principle and likely to be disastrous in practice". He added: "The impact on the prison population is likely to be much greater than the 4,000."

Doctors 'defying ban on Viagra'

BY LOUISE JURY

DOCTORS ARE defying the Government and prescribing the impotence drug Viagra on the NHS, the British Medical Association said yesterday.

A spokesman said it was aware some GPs were breaking a ban imposed by Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, last September amid fears that NHS prescriptions could cost the service millions of pounds.

And the GPs could be given official support from the BMA committee representing them, which meets on 21 January. It has threatened to issue its own advice if the Government does

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Tainted Cresson fights for survival



Edith Cresson, who is facing a rising tide of demands for her resignation from the European Commission AFP

THE POLITICAL crisis over fraud in the European Commission deepened yesterday with a scathing attack on Jacques Santer by the Prime Minister of Sweden and more calls for the sacking of two members of his team.

In a measure of the dismay felt by Scandinavian governments, even after Mr Santer, the Commission's President, promised a full clean-up on Monday, Goran Persson, the Swedish premier, wrote to him yesterday suggesting he was trying to stifle the fraud debate.

"This issue poses enormous dangers for the Union and for the public's faith in the Union," Mr Persson wrote, "if we do not speak out against unacceptable tendencies if we try to suppress discussion, then we do not act as responsible politicians. This is something I, for one, cannot be a part of."

He was replying to a letter from Mr Santer in which the Commission chief reprimanded him for "burting the Union" by discussing the suspension of a Commission whistleblower on Swedish television. The letter

BY KATHERINE BUTLER
in Brussels

to Mr Santer was intended to be confidential but, in keeping with the Swedish tradition of transparency, was immediately made public in Stockholm.

The resignations of commissioners Edith Cresson of France and Manuel Marin of Spain are being demanded by a majority of members of the European Parliament as their price for not sacking the entire Commission for financial mismanagement and fraud. The pressure for retribution is expected to grow today, as the Commission faces new allegations concerning the wife of the Portuguese commissioner Joao de Deus Pinheiro, who is alleged to have been given a job with the Commission.

A motion of censure against the Commission, which if passed would force its 20 members to resign en masse, will be voted on in Strasbourg tomorrow but will now be accompanied by a separate resolution specifically naming Mrs Cresson, the former

French prime minister and current commissioner for education and Mr Marin, a vice-president of the Commission.

The stakes were raised last night when Socialist MEPs, the second largest group in Strasbourg, tabled another resolution demanding that Mr Santer himself resign, if individual members are "deemed culpable of financial or administrative mismanagement".

The Socialists oppose what they call "cherry picking" individual commissioners but their tactic could backfire if Mr Santer ends up on trial.

Mr Marin, accused of turning a blind eye to serial mismanagement in the humanitarian aid division up to 1995, was contrite on Monday when he told MEPs he was "hurting" from the charges. But Mrs Cresson, who is being held responsible for the maladministration of EU-funded education and training schemes, angered MEPs by appearing arrogant and defensive.

Conservative and Christian Democratic MEPs grouped in the European Peoples Party (EPP) which, with over 200 members is the biggest bloc in the parliament, turned up the heat on Mr Santer, throwing their weight behind Liberal Democratic efforts to have the two most criticised commissioners forced out. But there were some signs yesterday that the commission's united front may be cracking.

Mr Santer and the Dutch commissioner Hans van den Broek appealed to the EPP's members last night not to criticise individuals. Officials believe the French government may come under pressure from Bonn today to urge Mrs Cresson to stand down. This will ensure German plans to push through sweeping budgetary reforms by March are not jeopardised.

EU diplomats yesterday said the Commission had been exposed by the Union's parliament as "living in a time warp".

"It is no longer enough to say you are innocent, you have to demonstrate it and you have to offer a credible response to allegations, or else you resign," a senior EU official said.

Germany aims to end British veto on taxes

BY KATHERINE BUTLER

and policy reforms aimed at preparing the bloc for expansion eastward.

But Mr Fischer said the failure to streamline the EU's decision-taking mechanisms ahead of enlargement would drive the bloc into paralysis and collapse. He said the conclusion of the Agenda 2000 spending negotiations in March must be followed by agreement at a summit in Cologne in June on the timing of a new constitutional conference to rewrite the EU's voting rules.

The key question here is the Union's readiness to accept majority decisions in as many areas as possible," Mr Fischer told MEPs. "The new federal government advocates limiting the need for unanimity in the longer term to questions of fundamental importance such as treaty amendments."

Germany took over the presidency of the European Union from Austria on 1 January and has set a deadline at the end of March for agreement on a sweeping package of budgetary

harmonisation.

European integration had to be pursued, he said, to embrace such areas as taxation, particularly since the launch of the single currency. "Economic and monetary integration is largely completed with the introduction of the euro. Only a few areas are lacking, such as closer harmonisation of tax policies as advocated by Germany."

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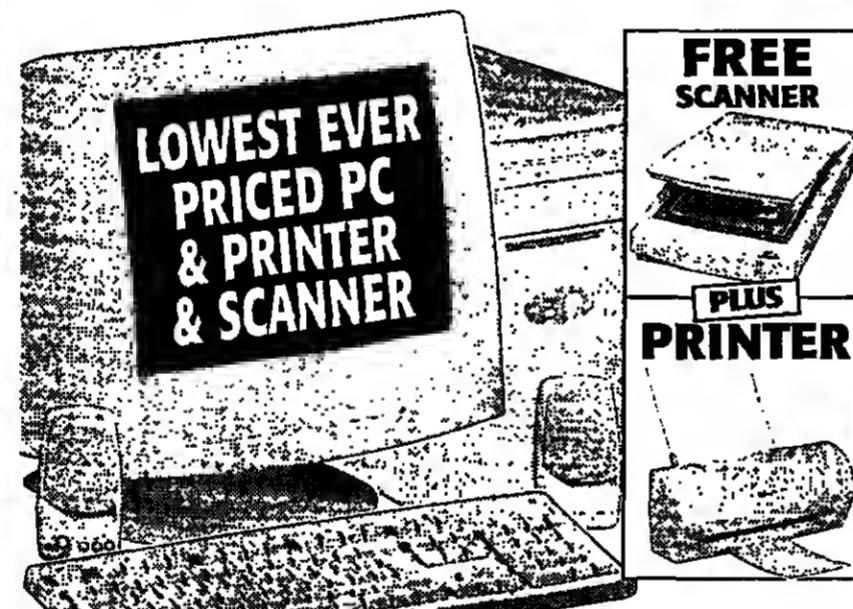
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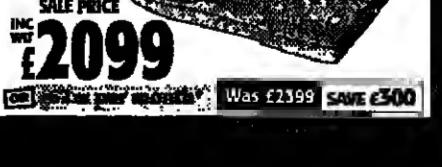


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THE INDEPENDENT
Wednesday 13 January 1999

BUSINESS

BRIEFING

BA links with Japanese carrier

BRITISH AIRWAYS and Japan Airlines will today unveil a wide-ranging link-up bringing together the two biggest carriers in Europe and Asia. BA and JAL are to form a marketing alliance that will enable the two airlines to code-share, link their frequent-flyer programmes and share airport facilities.

The agreement could be a prelude to JAL becoming a full member of the OneWorld alliance BA forged with four other international carriers last year. The aim of the BA-JAL link-up is to boost passengers and revenues at a time when air travel is slowing down.

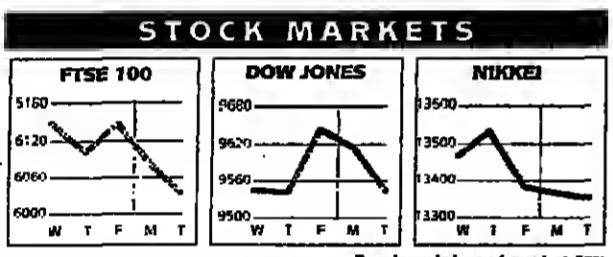
Deep recession 'unlikely'

EDDIE GEORGE (left), Governor of the Bank of England, said last night that the Bank's next economic forecasts, due out in early February, were unlikely to show the UK slipping into deep recession. He told the Institute of Manufacturing: "Frankly, I'd be surprised if our central projection were to suggest that the economy as a whole was falling into steep or protracted recession".

However, Mr George warned that the global economic slowdown could mean more pain for manufacturers in Britain. He stressed the Monetary Policy Committee would not hesitate to cut interest rates again if it believed inflation was likely to fall below the target.

Sears to sell credit card arm

SEARS IS expected to announce today the sale of its in-store credit card subsidiary, Creation Financial Services, in a deal expected to be worth £120m. The buyer is thought to be a financial institution. Analysts said a sale could help the retailing and home shopping group dissuade shareholders from agreeing to another bid from Philip Green, whose businesses include the Marks and Spencer fashion chains.



INTEREST RATES

Date	Close	Change	Chg %	52 wks high	52 wks low	Yield (%)
W	5.70	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
T	5.60	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
F	5.55	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	5.50	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	5.45	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	5.40	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	5.35	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	5.30	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
P	5.25	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	5.20	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	5.15	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	5.10	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	5.05	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	5.00	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
P	4.95	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	4.90	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	4.85	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	4.80	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	4.75	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	4.70	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
P	4.65	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	4.60	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	4.55	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	4.50	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	4.45	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	4.40	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
P	4.35	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	4.30	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	4.25	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	4.20	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	4.15	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	4.10	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
P	4.05	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	4.00	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	3.95	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	3.90	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	3.85	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	3.80	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
P	3.75	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	3.70	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	3.65	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	3.60	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	3.55	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	3.50	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
P	3.45	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	3.40	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	3.35	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	3.30	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	3.25	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	3.20	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
P	3.15	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	3.10	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	3.05	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	3.00	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	2.95	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	2.90	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
P	2.85	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	2.80	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	2.75	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	2.70	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	2.65	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	2.60	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
P	2.55	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	2.50	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	2.45	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	2.40	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	2.35	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	2.30	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
P	2.25	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
M	2.20	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
J	2.15	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
A	2.10	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
S	2.05	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67
G	2.00	-0.05	-0.85	6.195	4.599	2.67

Arjo
chief
quits in
radical
revamp,

Why yen's revival should concern us

IT IS a touch ironic that the currency markets yesterday responded to calls from Keizo Obuchi, Japan's Prime Minister, for stability in exchange rates by delivering the biggest one-day rise in the dollar against the yen in five years. It was what the Bank of Japan wanted when it spent billions on intervention in an attempt to halt the painful rise in the yen since last summer. But is this really what is meant by stability? Hardly.

Over the past four years the yen-dollar exchange rate has been all over the place. During the summer the yen was so weak that Tokyo actually became an affordable holiday destination. Since then it has risen by nearly a third in value - which is far too much for struggling Japanese exporters.

As that swing followed the loss of about four-fifths of its value between April 1995 and last summer, however, you can see why yen stability and even exchange rate "target zones", as mooted by Mr Obuchi on his tour of Europe this week, would appeal to the Japanese government. These are damaging swings even for the strongest economy, and Japan certainly is not that. Why is it happening, and what



OUTLOOK

is its importance to us here in the West? Curiously, given how badly a strong yen would damage economic recovery in Japan, the Japanese authorities have themselves been encouraging the yen's recent rise, again in the name of stability. Eisuke Sakakibara - "Mr Yen" - has been talking the dollar down in recent weeks because it had earlier looked as though the yen was falling too fast.

Even so, most economists would have urged the government to stick with a weak yen policy. The trough of 1.65 yen to the dollar is more or less where currency experts think it ought to be given the fundamental weakness of the Japanese econ-

omy. So why has the trend been back to high ground? One possible cause is that the Japanese have begun repatriating money from the US. There are two reasons why they might do this. The greatest chunk of Japanese overseas indirect investment is in US Treasuries, which have had a terrific bull run in recent years. Plainly this cannot go on for ever, and as doubts grow about the sustainability of the US economic miracle, as well as the whopping current account deficit America runs with the rest of the world, now seems as good a time as any to sell.

Secondly, long-bond yields have doubled in Japan in the past four months. They are still tiny by Western standards, but if product and asset prices are falling, as they are in Japan, Japanese government bonds certainly begin to look much better value than they did. A flight of capital to the perceived safety of the Japanese motherland spells big trouble for the US, which seems to be living more and more on borrowed foreign money. The arrival of the euro as an alternative reserve currency further turns up the heat.

More worrying still, the US current account deficit is growing like topsy. This year it could be heading

for a mind-boggling \$300bn, equivalent to 4 per cent of GDP. Basic laws of economics dictate that the currency must fall to compensate for this, and this indeed is what is beginning to happen. Unfortunately, dollar weakness could also retrigger inflationary pressures within the US economy, and that might bring the boom quite quickly to an end.

What's bad for Japan may therefore be bad for the US too. But even the mighty Alan Greenspan cannot buck the market for ever, and while some of the more apocalyptic predictions of the consequences of these trends look a tad exaggerated, we are obviously heading for quite dangerous waters.

Arjo Wiggins

CALLING THE bottom on a sinking share price can be a hazardous business. When a company in trouble protests that things cannot possibly get any worse, they usually can - and do. But Arjo Wiggins Appleton, the paper maker, which yesterday announced plans to split itself into three divisions, could just be an exception to the rule.

Not that the omens are good. Arjo

is a text-book example of how mergers - especially cross-border ones - go wrong. The trouble started in 1990 when Wiggins Teape of the UK joined forces with its American rival Appleton, both of which had been spun off from BAT in its successful attempt to fend off a breakup bid from Sir Jimmy Goldsmith.

A year later they were joined by a French partner, Arjo Mari-Prioux. But the businesses were never integrated properly and continued to be run as field offices inside a loose structure. So when paper prices boomed, Arjo was left with a much higher cost base than its rivals.

As a result, this *ménage à trois* has destroyed shareholder value on an epic scale. Since the original merger, £1.5m of capital has been sunk into a business which is now capitalised at just £191m. This decade, Arjo shares have lagged the rest of the market by a staggering 80 per cent.

So can Ken Minton succeed where others have failed? The former chief executive of Alporta, the chemicals group, is reorganising Arjo into three divisions in a belated attempt to squeeze out some cost savings. The declining carbonless and thermal division, which makes

paper used in credit card slips and fax machines, and the merchanting unit will then probably be sold, leaving Arjo to concentrate on premium, specialty and coated papers. Chief executive Philippe Beyeler's surplus to requirements and walkout with the customary payoff.

Arjo's accounts will be stained with plenty of red ink before the process is complete. But if Mr Minton succeeds the potential upside is big - analysts reckon a buyer would be willing to pay £500m for the merchanting division alone. Regardless of the history, investors may find it worth their while to take another look at Arjo.

Vickers/Giat

THE BARON from Brussels has pulled off another deal, but will it be enough to get Vickers firing on all cylinders? The agreement to put the group's Challenger tanks business into a joint venture with French tank manufacturer Giat shows that Vickers' chief executive is determined not to be outmanoeuvred as Europe's defence industry consolidates.

But has Baron Paul Bussye

picked the best partner? Giat is still state-owned, which means that it is almost certainly not as fighting fit as Vickers's defence business. What's more, the two companies' manufacturing facilities have carefully been left out of the new joint venture, thus depriving them of the opportunity to take out big lumps of cost.

On the other hand, Vickers and Giat will collaborate on the development of new products, which presumably means the next main battle tank for Europe's armies. Meanwhile the Challenger and Giat's Leclerc tank will continue to fight it out for what export orders there are in far-off places where they are still buying such things. As the market now ascribes virtually no value to Vickers defence business - indeed the entire group is not capitalised at much more than its existing cash pile - the Giat deal cannot hurt.

What Vickers really needs is to persuade more of Europe's 20 land-fighting vehicle manufacturers to come to the party. Or better still, an order or two. It is in there battling for tank deals in Greece, South Africa and Qatar. Just one order would lift the shares. Unfortunately, Leclerc is fighting for exactly the same orders, too.

News Analysis: US Internet stocks are soaring as investors seek the new Microsoft



In 1994 Yahoo! founders Jerry Yang (back left) and David Filo (front right) were just Net nerds. They, along with (left to right) Tim Koogle, Gary Valenzuela and Jeff Mallett, now run a \$41bn market cap behemoth

From Net nerds to kings of the Nasdaq

BY DAVID USBORNE
in New York

SO IT is fashionable these days to buy Internet stocks. You know this because they keep rising at rates that beggar belief. Witness the recent gravity-defying ascent of the technology-laden Nasdaq index in New York, only interrupted yesterday by a bout of profit-taking.

It is also fashionable to warn that the Internet is a bubble ready to burst and that wise investors will keep their distance. But is that right? Are we in a midst of a revolution so important that most of us just have trouble grasping it?

"The Internet," Fortune magazine says, "is the foundation of the new industrial order". This smacks of hyperbole, but there are investors out there who believe it. What they see is a crossing of a great divide, where the Internet is no longer the domain of the digerati, but is suddenly becoming mainstream. The Internet, in other words, has transcended being a toy for nerds and become the high street of the new millennium.

Never mind, then, that some companies leading the Nasdaq charge have yet to make one cent of profit, such as Amazon.com, the red-hot online book and CD retailer. If consumers are about to plunge en masse into the digital universe, the potential for profits down the road is almost unimaginable. With stakes so high, batte has been engaged between the players who want to harness that traffic and control it.

You do not have to search far to see the signs of this explosion. According to International Data Corp., a computer research group, the number of

value of eBay is now six times that of its non-virtual auction house great-uncle, Sotheby's.

Such value comparisons offer another illustration of the fabulosity - or the insanity - of the investor rush to these companies. Amazon.com gained no fewer than 1 million new customers in the run-up to Christmas. If it operated in bricks-and-mortar shops it would have had to have shelves extending 101 miles to accommodate the books and CDs sold at Christmas. Its market capitalisation now stands at \$25bn, compared with \$16.5bn for Sears, the department store that has been in the retail business for more than a century.

Or how about Yahoo!, the Internet directory company that went public in April 1996? Since then its shares have risen 95-fold to give the company a market value of \$40.5bn, larger even than such blue-chip monoliths as Boeing and Xerox. It was expectations of better-than-expected earnings due out from Yahoo! after the close of markets last night that drove the Nasdaq to its seventh consecutive record high on Monday, although the index fell back sharply yesterday amidst profit-taking. On Monday Yahoo! shares rose 70% to \$411 a share.

Those pouring money into Yahoo! and other darling stocks of the Internet are all looking for the new Microsoft. Those holding back are wondering how long these outlandish valuations can last. Who knows?

There is one other factor in favour of the bubble growing before it bursts. There are simply not enough Internet stocks out there. Paul Cook, manager in New York of the Munder Net Fund, says: "There are too many people who want to own these stocks and not enough to go around. The opportunity is open-ended".

Internet journeys. They offer direct, one-click access to the most travelled areas of the Net, such as news, personal finance, sports, travel, entertainment, recreation, romance chat rooms and so forth.

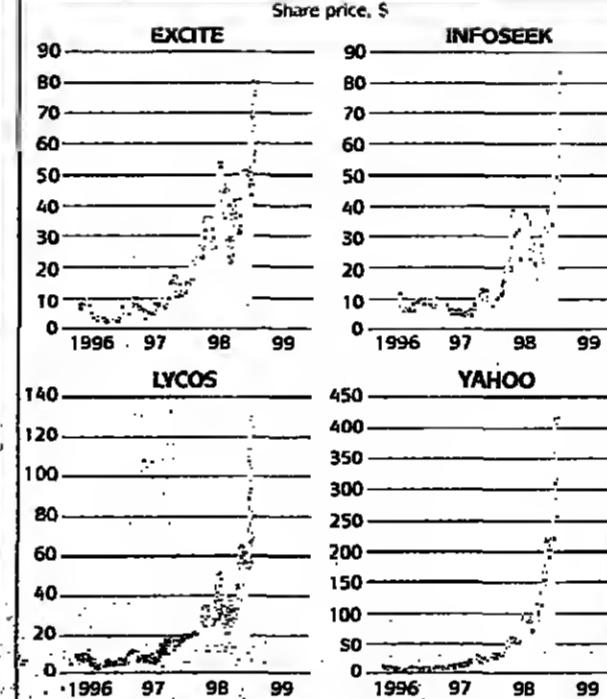
Whoever attracts the largest numbers of users to their portal page stands one day to rule the Internet. So far Yahoo! is winning the race. Showing that it well understands this, Disney yesterday launched a portal of its own. Called GO Network, it is a joint venture with Infoseek, which is 43 per cent Disney-owned.

As the primacy of the portals in cyberspace becomes more obvious so, in turn, does their attractiveness to advertisers - and their potential for making profits. With 70 million people hitting Yahoo! every month, no wonder advertisers are beginning to pay attention. According to Jupiter Communications, another Web research group, advertising on the Internet is set to rise from a fairly modest \$940m in the US in 1997 to \$8bn by 2002.

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INTERNET PORTALS' SHARES SOAR



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£200,000 - £499,999	6.56	5.25	6.37
£500,000 - £999,999	6.61	5.29	6.42
£1,000,000+	6.78	5.42	6.58

DIRECT ACCESS SAVINGS ACCOUNT FOR BUSINESS SAVERS			
BALANCE	INT. PAID YEARLY GROSS\$	NET\$	INT. PAID MONTHLY GROSS\$
£1 - £49,999	6.00	4.80	5.84
£50,000 - £199,999	6.03	4.82	5.87
£200,000 - £499,999	6.06	4.85	5.90
£500,000 - £999,999	6.10	4.88	5.94
£1,000,000+	6.20	4.96	6.03

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Greeting cards are just a pawn in the banana game

PRODUCERS of greeting cards yesterday sent an unpleasant message to the US and the European Union, branding them "bananas" for using the industry as a pawn in the latest trade dispute.

The Greeting Cards Association warned that thousands of jobs were threatened because

BY ANDREW VERTI

the US wants to slap a 100 per cent import duty on the cards as a weapon in the dispute over banana import duties.

Ray Cousins, chairman of the association, said: "We are merely a pawn in a much bigger game. Greetings cards has

been picked at random - it could have been anyone. People are very concerned because it is now clear this could become bogged down in bureaucracy and go on for months."

The US is also targeting the duty on other European Union imports worth half a billion euros (£700m). Industries

affected include cashmere sweaters, batteries, plastics, biscuits, bath oils, candles, lithographs, bed linen, cartons, wallets, handbags and cheese. Under US proposals, sanctions would start on 3 March.

UK industries would be hardest hit. In the cashmere industry, 700 jobs may be at risk

in the Scottish borders. The DTI estimates 2,700 British jobs could be at risk.

The banana war blew up because the US was dissatisfied with a new EU regime for banana imports, introduced on 1 January. The regime was created to answer World Trade Organisation concerns that it

protected imports from ex-colonies at the expense of US banana exporters such as Chiquita. The US claims that the regime is still too restrictive.

Yesterday, the WTO's Disputes Settlements Body in Geneva decided to reconvene its "bananas panel" to rule on

the EU's banana regime, a move the US had tried to block.

"We believe the sanctions are illegal because there has been no ruling about them in international law," said a spokesman for Sir Leon Brittan, EU trade commissioner.

Brian Wilson, trade minister at the DTI, said: "It is quite

wrong for one member of the WTO to decide unilaterally that another member has not complied. This dispute needs to be resolved in the framework of the WTO."

Ironically, the two biggest players in UK greetings cards, Hallmark and Carlton, are US-owned.

Vickers links with Giat in tank venture

THE RESTRUCTURING of Europe's fighting vehicles industry took a further step forward yesterday after Vickers, makers of the Challenger 2 tank announced plans to form a joint venture company with the state-owned French tank manufacturer Giat.

The alliance will cover sales and marketing, future product design and programme management but there are no plans for the time being to include the two companies' manufacturing facilities.

Nor does the agreement prevent either Vickers or Giat linking up with other manufacturers of land vehicles in their respective countries.

The Vickers-Giat deal follows an earlier merger between the land vehicles businesses of GKN and Alvis. Since then there has been speculation about whether Vickers would join the GKN-Alvis alliance or seek a partner in Europe or the

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

United States. A memorandum of intent signed yesterday paves the way for Vickers and Giat to form a joint venture company. But they will continue to operate separately in countries where the Challenger 2 is competing with the Giat's Leclerc main battle tank for orders.

The two companies are vying for an order from Greece worth up to £1.5bn for 250 tanks. There are also competitions taking place to supply South Africa and Qatar with tanks, orders worth £350m and £250m respectively.

Jacques Loppon, chief executive of Giat Industries, said the agreement would accelerate the consolidation process taking place in Europe. There are 20 manufacturers of land defence vehicles whereas most analysts believe the market can only support five or six in the longer term.

The agreement is the second major deal pulled off by Baron Paul Buisse, the new chief executive of Vickers.

Last month he announced the £300m acquisition of Ulstein, a Norwegian marine propulsion company. Baron Buisse said the Giat deal would unlock significant benefits for the two parties.

Giat lost FFr 2.85bn in 1997 on sales of FFr 7.0m francs after putting aside large provisions to pay for the rationalisation of its manufacturing facilities in France.

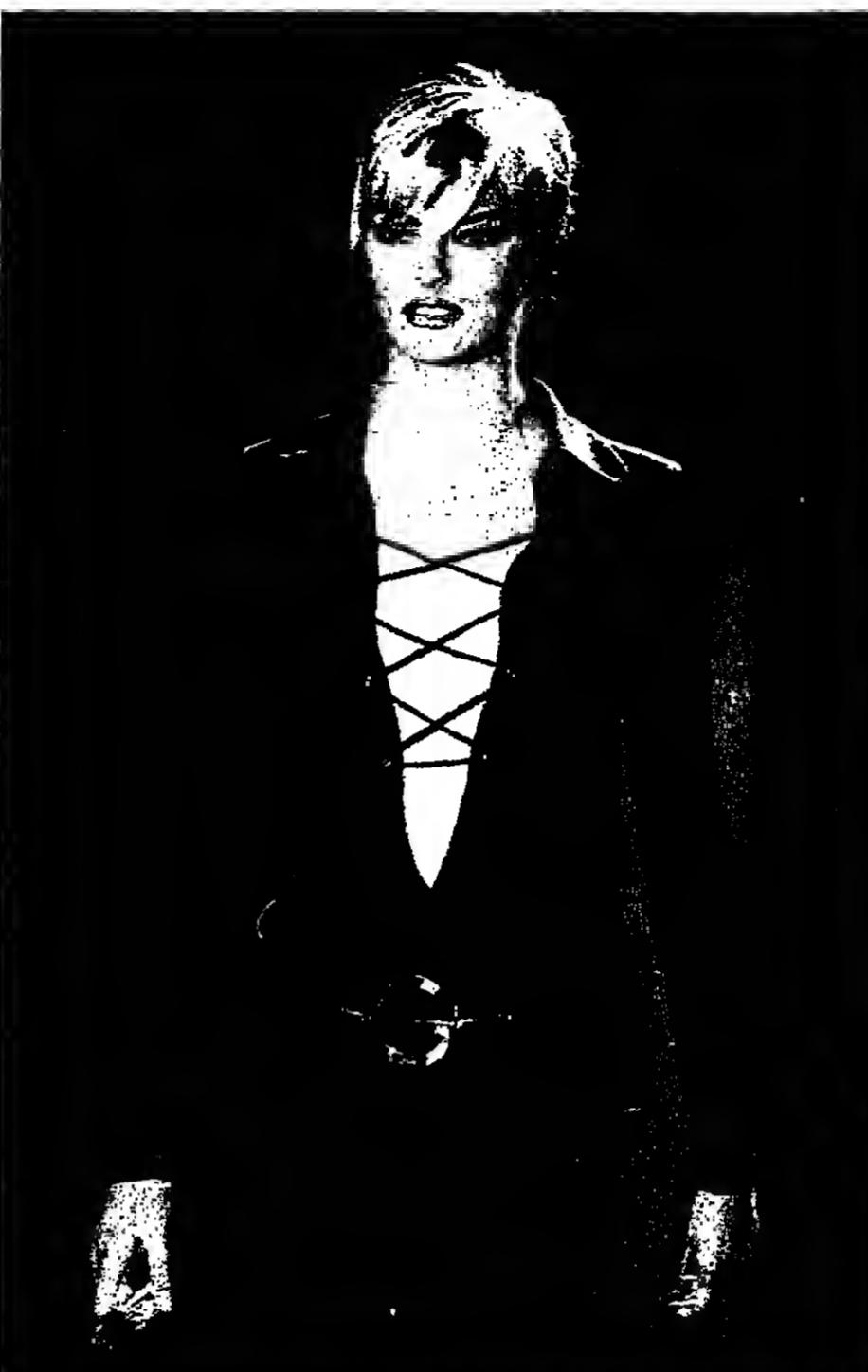
In the last three years it has shed 1,600 jobs. Mr Joppon, the first private sector executive to run Giat, was brought in to steer it towards partial privatisation. However, Giat is still not expected to break even until 2002.

Vickers is also rationalising its manufacturing capacity with the closure of the Leeds tank factory with the loss of 600 jobs.

COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day	X-div
Repak (I)	41.9m (42.3m)	7.0m (6.8m)	20.3p (19.9p)	5.5p (5.1p)	22.02.99	16.01.99
Outlook (F)	156.79m (258.89m)	12.01m (21.69m)	5.50p (5.12p)	5.50p (5.00p)	06.04.99	01.03.99
C & B Publishing (F)	21.67m (22.32m)	0.911m (0.815m)	12.2p (12.0p)	n/a	-	-
Elles & Everard (I)	391.5m (564.1m)	17.0m (16.5m)	12.4p (12.0p)	3.8p (3.5p)	09.03.99	18.01.99
Iraq Confidential Group (F)	n/- (-)	17.0m (14.5m)	10.2p (9.8p)	5.5p (5.1p)	26.03.99	25.01.99
Enterprise (F)	26.5m (20.1m)	3.6m (3.7m)	10.3p (5.8p)	3.2p (-)	30.04.99	18.01.99
ITG Group (F)	166.36m (3.40m)	0.737m (0.126m)	4.7p (1.8p)	n/a	-	-
Scotiabank Group (I)*	32.7m (30.8m)	-16.1m (-)	1.1p (-)	1.1p (-)	-	-
Santander (I)	52.2m (50.8m)	5.2m (4.0m)	6.7p (5.8p)	1.75p (1.25p)	19.02.99	25.01.99
Scottish Highland Hotels (F)	21.65m (17.55m)	4.86m (3.49m)	14.1p (12.1p)	4.0p (-)	05.04.99	15.03.99

(*) - First - (I) - Interim * Previous figure pro forma



Gucci on the catwalk: LVMH, the French luxury brands group, has bought another 9.5 per cent of Gucci, this time from the Milan-based designer Prada, taking its stake in the Italian fashion house to more than 14.5 per cent.

US bank tops merger league

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

US rival, taking third place with \$12.4bn to its credit.

Lazard, which took the top slot in 1997, came fourth while NM Rothschild came ninth.

Piers de Monfort, the head of Morgan Stanley's UK advisory business, said yesterday that the firm's position was boosted by its role in a number of high-profile transactions such as the \$45bn BP/Amoco deal, where it advised Amoco, and Commercial Union's \$5.5bn merger with General Accident.

The group also advised Astra, the Swedish pharmaceuticals group, in its recent merger with Zeneca of the UK.

Unlike Merrill Lynch and Credit Suisse First Boston, who have both improved their position in the past year, Morgan Stanley has built its UK market position organically rather than by acquiring the existing franchise of an established British merchant bank.

First Leisure hints at joint ventures

FIRST LEISURE, the health club and disco operator run by Michael Grade, the former chief executive of Channel 4, yesterday hinted at possible disposals or joint ventures when it said it was "discussing with third parties a number of strategic initiatives", writes Peter Thal Larsen.

In a vague announcement to the Stock Exchange, First Leisure said the discussions were at a "very exploratory stage" and that it was too early to say whether they would result in any agreement.

However, the statement avoided any reference of a takeover, prompting City observers to conclude that First Leisure is not in bid talks. That sentiment was reflected in the shares, which dropped 8p to 224p. Analysts said First Leisure could be discussing the sale of its nightclubs or its health and fitness clubs.

IN BRIEF

Steady progress at Equitas

EQUITAS, the reinsurance vehicle set up to run off £15m of past liabilities at Lloyd's of London, reported steady progress yesterday for the half year to September 31. Liabilities were reduced to £11.5bn after Equitas paid £767m in claims.

Euribor trade up

TRADE in Euribor contracts on Liffe, London's futures exchange, soared yesterday, a development seen as confirmation that the Brussels Euribor, not the London Euro Libor, would become the benchmark money market rate. More than 12,000 Euribor contracts were traded on Liffe, 15 times the typical daily volume, after four big trading houses switched to the new contract. By contrast, only 1,700 Euro Libor contracts were traded on Liffe.

Rentokil buys

RENTOKIL INITIAL yesterday announced eight acquisitions totalling £37m in cash, which will between them add £49m to annual turnover. They include two textile services companies, Adrett in Germany and the SI per cent of BTMF in France that is not already owned. It has acquired five smallish security businesses, three in the UK, one in the Netherlands and one in Canada. The final acquisition is the Initial Staffing franchise in Cincinnati.

Insurance deal

ACE, the Bermuda-based and New York-listed insurance group, has agreed to buy the international and domestic property and casualty insurance businesses of Cigna for \$3.45bn (£2.12bn) in cash. The acquisition will be financed partly from cash reserves and partly from new equity, debt and convertible securities. The domestic business includes further claims on Cigna's now discontinued pollution insurance policies.

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

SO AU REVOIR then, Philippe Beylier, who resigned as chief executive of Arjo Wiggins Appleton, the world's biggest maker of fine writing paper.

The Anglo-French maker of fax and fine-art paper is splitting the business into three divisions, each of which will be managed by its own chief executive and board, so Mr Beylier won't be replaced.

Kenneth Minton, a "hands-on" manager who left the chemicals company Laporte to become Arjo's non-executive chairman in November 1997, will become executive chairman of the group's long-time former boss, Ralph "Five Times a Night" Halpern.

Mr Cooklin takes over at an interesting time for Thorn. It demerged from EMI in 1996, but Radio Rentals was hit by damaging litigation in the US.

Mr Cooklin has been a familiar figure on the retail scene for 30 years. He joined Signet six years ago from the Burton Group, where he was chief executive. He joined the men's suit chain in 1970 and was a close associate of the group's long-time former boss, Ralph "Five Times a Night" Halpern.

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MAIN MOVERS														
RISES					FALLS									
PRIDE(P) C66P(+) 5.626					PRIDE(P) C66P(-) 5.626									
Pilleg 73.50 +5.50 +5.50					Pilleg 73.50 +5.50 +5.50									
Perfume 65.25 +6.25 +6.25					Perfume 65.25 +6.25 +6.25									
Bentley Jenkins 560.00 +7.00 +7.00					Bentley Jenkins 560.00 +7.00 +7.00									
Partex 148.00 +8.00 +8.00					Partex 148.00 +8.00 +8.00									
Skiold Biogas 527.50 +4.00 +4.00					Skiold Biogas 527.50 +4.00 +4.00									
Solex 4.40 +0.00 +0.00					Solex 4.40 +0.00 +0.00									
Kalen 57.00 +7.00 +7.00					Kalen 57.00 +7.00 +7.00									
Lambert Foss 65.50 +5.00 +5.00					Lambert Foss 65.50 +5.00 +5.00									
Sopha 105.50 +7.00 +7.00					Sopha 105.50 +7.00 +7.00									
MARKET LEADERS														
TOP 20 VOLUMES at 5pm														
Rank	Symbol	Name	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Tm	P/E Ratio					
1	BP	British Petrol	1,000.00	998.00	BP	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
2	STK	Standard Charter	2,400.00	2,380.00	STK	2,400.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
3	BPB	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
4	BPB.L	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.L	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
5	BPB.S	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.S	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
6	BPB.W	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.W	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
7	BPB.Y	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.Y	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
8	BPB.Z	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.Z	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
9	BPB.A	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.A	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
10	BPB.B	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.B	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
11	BPB.C	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.C	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
12	BPB.D	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.D	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
13	BPB.E	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.E	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
14	BPB.F	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.F	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
15	BPB.G	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.G	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
16	BPB.H	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.H	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
17	BPB.I	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.I	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
18	BPB.J	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.J	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
19	BPB.K	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.K	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
20	BPB.L	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.L	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
21	BPB.M	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.M	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
22	BPB.N	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.N	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
23	BPB.O	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.O	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
24	BPB.P	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.P	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
25	BPB.Q	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.Q	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
26	BPB.R	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.R	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
27	BPB.S	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.S	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
28	BPB.T	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.T	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
29	BPB.U	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.U	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
30	BPB.V	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.V	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
31	BPB.W	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.W	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
32	BPB.X	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.X	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
33	BPB.Y	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.Y	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
34	BPB.Z	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.Z	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
35	BPB.A	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.A	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
36	BPB.B	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.B	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
37	BPB.C	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.C	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
38	BPB.D	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.D	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
39	BPB.E	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.E	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
40	BPB.F	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.F	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
41	BPB.G	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.G	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
42	BPB.H	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.H	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
43	BPB.I	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.I	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
44	BPB.J	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.J	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
45	BPB.K	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.K	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
46	BPB.L	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.L	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
47	BPB.M	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.M	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
48	BPB.N	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.N	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
49	BPB.O	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.O	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
50	BPB.P	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.P	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
51	BPB.Q	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.Q	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
52	BPB.R	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.R	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
53	BPB.S	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.S	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
54	BPB.T	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.T	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
55	BPB.U	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.U	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
56	BPB.V	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.V	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
57	BPB.W	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.W	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
58	BPB.X	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.X	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
59	BPB.Y	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB.Y	1,000.00	-0.00	+	10.5					
60	BPB.Z	BPB	1,000.00	998.00	BPB									

Profit warnings take their toll

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

ANOTHER ROUND of profit warnings eroded stock market confidence. Although corporate action, real and rumoured, should have been strong enough to keep shares on their toes, Footsie ended 51.4 points down at 6,033.6.

Imperial Chemical Industries, once the bellwether of Britain's industrial health, now one of the index's Cinderella constituents, bucked the trend.

The shares enjoyed a late run, climbing 27p to 51.5p, with talk of US interest exciting the market.

At least one leading transatlantic investment house was said to be keen on the shares, prompting speculation that a predatory strike is planned.

ICI has been reshaped, but the exercise has not gone smoothly. Last spring the shares hit 1,24p as the market anticipated a smooth transition from bulk to specialty chemicals. The group has since had a torrid time, with its failure to clinch sales of unwanted operations causing concern about its debt mountain.

It was another busy session, with share turnover topping 1.2 billion. At one time Footsie was up 55.3 but the flow of unsettling trading statements and then a weak

ASK CENTRAL, the latest Kaye family restaurant venture which lifted its chain from 30 to 50 last year and plans to open another 20 this year, firmed 5p to 372.5p. It enjoyed good festive trading. Interim profits were sharply higher and the market is looking for £3.7m for the year just ended against £2m. Ian Berry at stockbroker Beeson Gregory expects £5.4m for this year.

New York display took their toll. Supporting indices weakened and Government stocks incurred falls of up to 45p.

Allied Domecq, the pubs and spirits group, lead the retreat. The long-time underperforming blue chip once again disappointed its followers as it rolled out a profits warning, blaming poor pub sales and slack demand in Latin America. The shares led Footsie lower with an 81.5p (after 92.5p) fall to 51.6p.

The Allied stockwaves were felt at Bass, down 74.5p at 805p, and Scottish & Newcastle, 25.5p to 71.5p.

The Old English Pub Co increased the brewers' droop when it announced disappointing sales, blaming, among other influences, the flu bug. The shares, although

ABN Amro is thought to be holding its year's profits forecast at £9.1m, fell 49p to 262.5p.

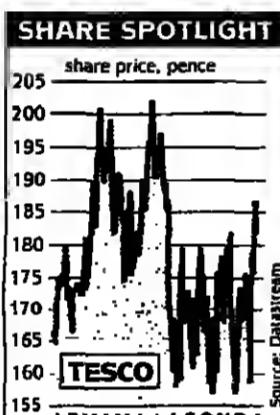
Kingfisher produced a comfortable trading statement but the shares fell 25p to 624.5p; JJB Sports slumped 38p to 249p after warning profits would be towards the lower end of estimates, say 241p, against hopes of 248p.

On the under-card, trading comments became increasingly cautious. Furniture maker Cornwall Parker dipped 5p to 57.5p on a profits warning and Riva, a software group, plunged 11p to 21p after saying profits would be around £700,000, down from £1.3m.

Scottish Highland Hotels, down 45p at 80.5p, was another casualty of downbeat comments. Chemical group Ellis & Everard also joined the trading gloom, falling 17.5p to 201p.

But fashion discounter Matalan added 17p to 369.5p after offering a round of Christmas trading cheer, and Dixons, figures today, surged further 33p to a 914p peak.

On the corporate front General Electric Co was again to the fore, up 15p to 564p, on French reports that it could agree a merger with Thomson.



CSF by the end of the month.

Vickers shaded 25p to 164.5p after confirming rumours of a tank link with the state owned French group, Giat.

First Leisure Corporation also confirmed it was in talks, although it seems a bid is not on the agenda and the shares fell 8p to 224p.

Airtech, an electronics group, is in talks which could involve a merger, and the

shares added 8p to 35.5p; Dudley Jenkins, a mailing list supplier, jumped 67.5p to 560p after signalling a possible 680p offer, and IT company Division, confirming an approach, hardened 1p to 35p.

Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries, defending a Pac-Man attack from Marston Thompson & Eversden, fell 25p to 465p; Marston lost 5p to 291.5p.

Mirror, the newspaper publisher, firmed 3p to 169p on suggestions of institutional pressure for a merger with Trinity, the provincial newspaper producer, up 10.5p to 439p.

Tescos, 9.5p stronger at 185.5p, was supported by Deutsche Morgan Grenfell comments, but British Airways failed to hold an early gain, ending 6p off at 396.5p after ICI, bearish for five years, decided the shares were oversold. The airline has been hit by a barrage of profit downgradings and the failure of its link with American Airlines to materialise.

Coca-Cola Beverages was flat, up 3p to 112p, as CSFB cut its price target from 165p to 140p. Lasmo, in talks with Enterprise Oil, gave up 2p to 104p although Salomon Smith Barney put a 170p target on the shares.

SHARES OF Environmental Property Services, the property services arm of the old Dean Corporation, are riding at an 8.75p high but are still undervalued, says stockbroker Teather & Greenwood.

Outsourcing of property maintenance is a growth area and analyst David Taylor says EPS is well placed to grow. Profits for 1999 should be around £1.52m with £1.72m next year.

Shire Pharmaceuticals rose 29p to 459p following a US investment presentation and KS Biomedix slipped 5p to 265.5p after duly reporting positive trials on its osteoarthritis treatment.

Alba, a domestic appliance group which is Britain's largest supplier of televisions, gained 3p to 186p after Henderson Crosthwaite said buy.

Property group Greycoat held at 190p. Delancey Estates has lifted its stake to almost 13 per cent. Versatile, duly confirmed it may sell off its specialist glass painting business and hardened 0.25p to 1p.

SEAG VOLUME: 1.2 billion **SEAG TRADES:** 77,273 **GILTS INDEX:** 115.17 -0.81

over the last 18 months. The overall £5bn order book has been maintained at the level of last year, and specialist services have increased orders by 18 per cent. The shares fell 2.5p to 177p.

Peter Torn, group chief executive of Aggregates, confirmed that in spite of a poor third quarter performance in the second half of 1998 was satisfactory and trading ended the year on a firm note. Annual savings of £13m have been achieved as a result of the merger with CAMAS in 1997. The shares shed 0.5p to 69p.

The group's cash position remains strong, even after buying back 10 per cent of its convertible preference shares

KINGFISHER, the B&Q to Woolworths retail group, added a ray of sunshine to Britain's gloomy high street sector yesterday when it reported solid growth in Christmas sales, led by growth at Woolworths and Superdrug.

Kingfisher's announcement coincided with a flurry of Christmas trading statements from retailers which suggest that "value-based" stores have fared better than their higher priced rivals this year as consumers tighten their belts.

Matalan, the edge-of-town discount clothing group which typically offers branded clothing at discounts of up to 50 per cent,

reported strong sales growth. Signet, the former Ratners jeweller group, also did well.

Louis van Blixen, retail analyst at SG Securities, commented: "If there is a trend emerging, it is that the discounters are doing better than the rest." John Richards, at BT Alex Brown added: "The general picture looks pretty gloomy and it looks as if consumers are looking for value."

Yesterday's discount success follows good figures already reported by Merchant Retail, which runs the cut-

pany had the right strategies in place for long-term growth. The European sales alliance continues to attract new customers, suppliers and partners. Operating profit in the UK were unchanged, although sales were actually a touch lower, and prices were under pressure from the autumn onwards.

But, given that over half the turnover and almost half the profits are generated in the US where until the last few days the overall economic position remains remarkably optimistic, the outlook can no longer be ignored. Sales in the US rose by 18 per cent, but this came mainly

from acquisitions and volume gains were being offset by falling prices.

Analysts immediately downgraded forecasts for the full year from £24m to £22m, and the shares fell 17.5p to 201p – above their low point of 166p last October, but well down on the previous year's peak of 230p at the start of 1998.

Forecasts still put earnings at 24.4p a share, which would adequately cover a repeat of last year's dividend of 9.5p a share. But at just over eight times earnings, the market fully anticipates tough times ahead. Growth depends on further acquisitions in an industry ripe for further consolidation.

The group believes that market research is becoming a global industry as multinational companies increasingly award all their business to a single supplier.

At the same time, Taylor is in the process of abandoning its national structure in favour of global units specialising in the automotive and telecommunications industry.

Analysts said they supported Taylor's strategy but were concerned that it remains vulnerable to a slowing economy – two-thirds of its revenues come from one-off projects. "At about 100p we rate the shares a bold," one broker said yesterday.

IN BRIEF

development group, and Aggregate Industries, the building materials and merchanting group, both did their best to reassure the City yesterday with positive trading statements. Peter Mason, group chief executive of Ameac confirmed that the trading outcome for the year just ended would be in line with market expectations.

The group's cash position

remains strong, even after

buying back 10 per cent of its convertible preference shares

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Investment: Sports retailer disappoints with warning on full-year profits

JJB runs into trouble after acquiring rival

By NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

JJB SPORTS, the sports retailer, further disappointed investors yesterday when it issued a downbeat trading statement which included a warning on full-year profits. The main problem has been Sports Division, the rival sports chain acquired for £290m in September.

In the seven weeks to 9 January, sales in the Sports Division stores fell by 16 per cent on a like-for-like basis compared with the same period last year. This was worse than expected and compared with an improved performance at the JJB stores, where same-store sales rose by 7.4 per cent in the same period.

Sports Division's problems

are the same as those reported at the company's interim results in October, namely a shortage of new-season stock

and the elimination of discount and clearance sales. The chain has also been up against tough comparisons last year, when it spent over £1m on advertising.

JJB said it now expects group profits in the year to January to be towards the lower end of market expectations of £24m-£28m. The news disappointed analysts, who pointed out that the enlarged JJB Sports is now worth little more than the £290m it paid for Sports Division in September. That deal was part-funded by a rights issue priced at 440p per share. Yesterday the share price gave up earlier gains to slide 38.5p to 249p.

JJB is suffering from the

problems that have gripped the sports retail sector since last spring, when Sports Divi-

JJB SPORTS: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £311m, share price 245p (-38.5p)

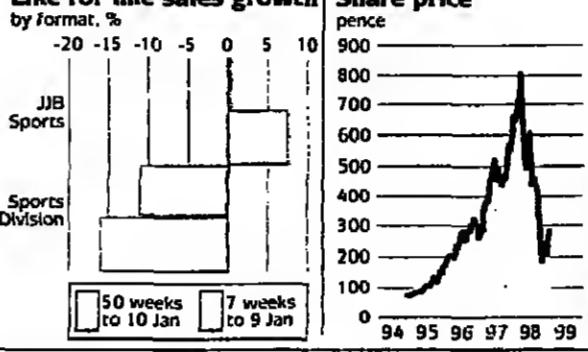
Five year record 94 95 96 97 98

Turnover (£m) 43.8 61.3 89.6 131 204

Pre-tax profits (£m) 4.6 7.6 12.9 20.2 34.2

Earnings per share (p) 4.1 6.2 9.2 14.4 25.4

Dividends per share (p) 1.1 2.9 4.5 6.7



Share price pence

900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0

Source: Investors



Source: Investors

50 weeks to 10 Jan 7 weeks to 9 Jan

Source: Investors

Taylor Nelson quashes fears on merger

By PETER THAL LARSEN

TAYLOR NELSON SOFRES, the market research group, yesterday quashed market fears that its year-old merger had run into trouble, with a confident trading statement.

Shares in Taylor Nelson jumped 4.5p to 98.5p as Tony Cowling, Taylor's chairman, said the integration with Sofres, the French network which was Taylor's merger partner in December 1997, was going well.

He added that, despite a slowdown in some markets as a result of declining economic growth, results were still in line with market expectations.

He was speaking as Taylor appointed David Lowden, the former finance director of Asprey & Garrard, the jewellers controlled by Prince Jefri of Brunei, as its new finance director.

Mr Lowden, 41, is also a former executive of AC Nielsen, the US market research giant which is one of Taylor's principal competitors.

Yesterday's statement helped Taylor's rehabilitation in the stock market, where its shares have suffered over fears that the worldwide economic slowdown would hurt demand for its businesses.

Last month, the shares touched a low of 67.75p, compared with a 12-month high of 144.5p.

Taylor now pursues the mundane business of television audience research and conducting consumer panels in 30 countries around the world – it recently expanded into South Korea and Thailand.

The group believes that market research is becoming a global industry as multinational companies increasingly award all their business to a single supplier.

At the same time, Taylor is in the process of abandoning its national structure in favour of global units specialising in the automotive and telecommunications industry.

Analysts said they supported Taylor's strategy but were concerned that it remains vulnerable to a slowing economy – two-thirds of its revenues come from one-off projects. "At about 100p we rate the shares a bold," one broker said yesterday.

Tough times expected for Ellis

lieves its out-of-town superstores are a potential winner.

The stock issue at Sports Division will

SPORT

Basketball: 'Superman'... 'God'... the Muhammad Ali of his generation. Can the sport survive without its greatest talent?

Jordan leaving haunting legacy with retirement

AT THE United Center basketball arena in Chicago, they worship Michael Jordan like a god. The stadium would not have been built without him and without his extraordinary record-breaking feats with the Chicago Bulls.

Jordan was the man who, more than any other, dragged the Bulls out of obscurity and transformed them into the most electrifying team in the history of basketball.

He has become the most instantly recognisable name in American sports, the Muhammad Ali or Babe Ruth of his generation. A statue in the arena calls Jordan the best there ever was and the best there ever will be - a piece of hyperbole that few would disagree with.

But now, it seems, the Bulls - and the world - will have to learn to live without him. After months of rumours, compounded by a bitter six-month labour dispute that wiped out the first part of the new basketball season, Jordan has decided to announce his retirement.

The news was widely leaked by friends and associates who have been hoping against hope for months to persuade him to stay for another season or two, and the official confirmation is expected to come in a news conference in Chicago as early as today.

The reaction to his decision could only be described as stunned disbelief. "Say it ain't so, Mike," implored one newspaper headline. But even the most hyperbolic sports-writers - the ones who have compared Jordan to Superman and God himself - know that the writing has been on the wall for some time.

Jordan has never hidden his wish to quit while he was still on top of the game. After 16 professional seasons, he has achieved all that a sportsman could possibly hope to achieve: leading the Bulls to six National Basketball Association championships in eight seasons, including the last three in a row; being named Most Valuable Player five times; helping the United States pick up two Olympic gold medals; and - perhaps most significantly - becoming a legend in his own lifetime, a sporting phenomenon capable not only of wowing sports arenas but of driving entire economic enterprises and influencing stock prices on Wall Street, too.

Advancing age - he turns 36 next month - is probably not the only factor. The six-month NBA lock-out, that revolved around salaries for star players like him, appears to have left a bitter taste in his mouth, as it has for millions of disenchanted basketball fans. Although actively involved in negotiations for most of the dispute, he distanced himself in the closing stages.

BY ANDREW GUMBEL
in Los Angeles

As the stand-off was finally resolved last week, Jordan was in the Bahamas on holiday. His teammates report that he has not been following his usual work-out routine and has spent much of his time playing golf. He is also said to have cut a tendon in a finger, which would probably disqualify him for the belated start of the season on 5 February.

The arguments over star salaries have also hit a fuse under the very bedrock of the Chicago Bulls. Since the summer, Jordan has been tussling with the Bulls' chairman, Jerry Krause, particularly after the departure of the team's coach, Phil Jackson, for an "extended sabbatical". Since only four of the Bulls' players are on contract, Jordan's departure is going to make it much harder for Krause to hold on to his other star players - the forward Scottie Pippen, whom Jordan calls his "little brother", and the rebounder Dennis Rodman.

It is just possible that Jordan is bluffing, or that he will change his mind. After all, he has quit before. In 1993, after leading the Bulls to their first three championship titles,

'It was the best last moment in the history of sport. Jordan didn't retire at the top. He retired while dancing across it'

he made the extraordinary decision to retire from basketball and try his luck at baseball.

He never made it past the minor league, and 18 months later he sent a famous telegram to the Bulls bearing just two words: "I'm back."

His first retirement appeared to be motivated, once again, by money and labour disputes. It also followed hard on the heels of the murder, still unsolved, of his father in North Carolina.

This time though, the experts are in little doubt that Jordan means business. "When he retired the first time, I was one of the few who kept saying he eventually would return," the columnist Lacy Banks wrote in yesterday's *Chicago Sun-Times*.

"But I can't share in that optimism this time."

If this is indeed the end, Jordan's fans will be left with a haunting memory of his final act in professional basketball: the extraordinary 18ft jump shot with which he clinched the championship for the Bulls with five seconds to go in the final game with

their arch rivals, the Utah Jazz, in June.

After he completed the winning shot, Jordan's right arm remained extended in a frozen image of victory - a moment that was widely recalled yesterday. "It was a moment become sculpture," enthused Bill Plaschke in the *Los Angeles Times*. "It was perhaps the best last moment in the history of sports... Michael Jordan didn't retire at the top. He retired while dancing across it."

As a player, Jordan was something of a late developer. In high school in North Carolina, he hesitated for a long time between basketball and baseball - a hesitation that would affect his later career, too. Although he was twice named college player of the year, he was not initially believed to be quite the star material he turned into and was judged to be only the third best player of his year when he was drafted from college to the Bulls in 1984.

Soon, though, he was stunning the crowds with his dunk shots, his hand-switching, his extraordinary point-scoring capacity (63 points in a single, fabled game against the Boston Celtics) and his ability to deliver at the crucial moment.

As he propelled the Bulls towards the top, the team drafted Phil Jackson as coach and Pippen and Horace Grant (later replaced by Rodman) as fellow players. By 1991, the most successful line-up in NBA history was in place, and wiped out the competition year after year.

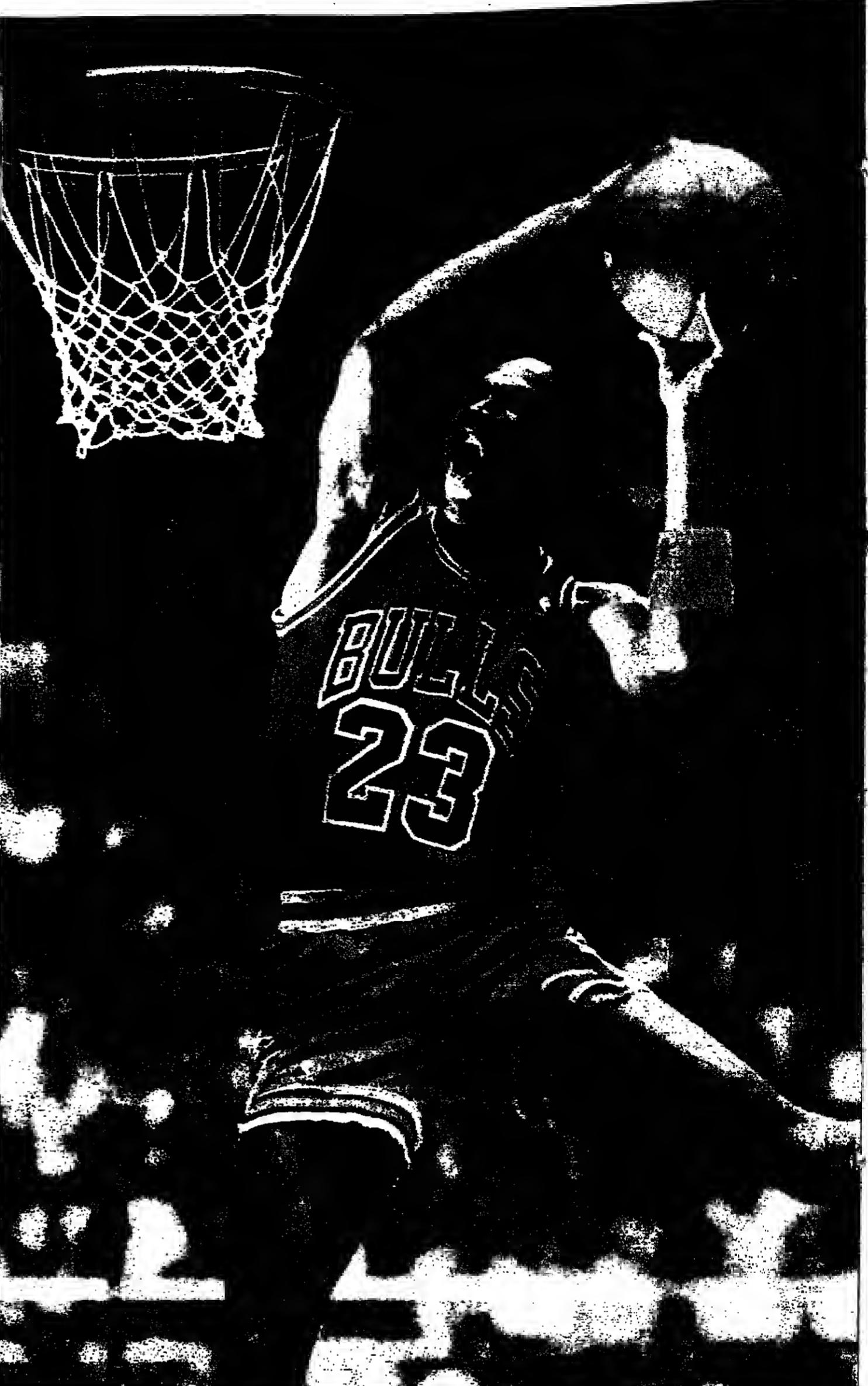
So strong was the fascination Jordan exerted that he became the darling of advertisers, sponsors and merchandisers.

Nike designed a shoe, the Air Jordan, just for him and made a fortune out of it. He endorsed hamburgers, hot dogs, soft drinks, cars, airlines and more. When he returned to professional basketball in 1995, the share price of Nike and McDonald's shot up.

In 1993 the *Chicago Tribune* calculated his revenue-generating abilities were worth \$1bn (£600m) to the city of Chicago alone. Last year, *Fortune* magazine estimated he had contributed \$10bn dollars to the US economy as a whole.

His departure will thus be a blow of staggering proportions. He was one of the few reasons fans were still clinging on to a sport that was struggling with its finances and its self-image even before the NBA lock-out.

The Chicago Bulls may not survive his retirement, and the rest of the league is trembling too. As a Chicago fan told an overnight radio call-in, nobody is indispensable, but Michael Jordan might just be the exception to that rule.



Michael Jordan dragged the Chicago Bulls from obscurity into the most electrifying team in the history of basketball

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School helps Martin-Jenkins to grow up

New faces for 1999: Durham Academy has sharpened all-round skills and frame of mind of Sussex cricketer. By David Llewellyn

THE NAME is big enough in every sense of the word to be a burden. The late Jim Laker gently poked fun at it when he said: "There are a lot of people in the field of cricket broadcasting these days, there's Christopher Martin-Jenkins to name three of them."

But the 23-year-old Robin Martin-Jenkins is not bothered. "I would never dream of dropping the Martin-Jenkins bit," he said. "If anything it has helped me rather than hindered my progress over the years. As I was going through the ranks of schoolboy cricket and then later in trials with Sussex I would get looked at more than the other boys, because people were interested in the name. But I have still had to come up with the goods. It is not the name that has got me where I am."

At least Robin's cricket career is not going to be one long comparison with that of his father: Christopher is once removed from the professional world his son, a right-hand bat and right arm fast-medium bowler, has just entered with Sussex. "My father is not a bad batsman," said Robin, who like his old man, the Daily Telegraph cricket correspondent and BBC Test Match Special commentator, plays for his club, Horsham, whenever he gets the chance.

"But, because he is a journalist and a broadcaster, while I am a professional cricketer, I have nothing to live up to in terms of playing the

game and matching or bettering his achievements. He is not an Ian Botham. I feel very sorry for Liam Botham and other sons of famous sports people from that point of view."

As sound as those sentiments are, Martin-Jenkins is already having to live up to his own achievements for Sussex, where he is beginning to show all the signs of turning into a genuine all-rounder.

He was fourth highest in his county's first-class batting averages at a shade under 30, and he proved with a couple of Championship half-centuries that he can hit the ball. He is correct, but not afraid to go for his shots.

His fast medium bowling - and the occasionally wickedly quicker ball - brought him 22 wickets at 19.86, in the handful of Championship matches his final-year studies at Durham University allowed him. With his height he can generate useful bounce, and although he strives for consistency of rhythm there is a quicker delivery that can catch out the best of batsmen.

Indeed, his bowling looks to be the real thing. A career-best 7 for 54 against Glamorgan was a match-winning performance late last summer and there is excited talk, in the

shires and in the game in general, of him having the potential to go all the way to the top.

Martin-Jenkins is having none of it. Not surprising, really. He graduated with a degree in sociology and has a sharp enough grasp of the realities of his chosen profession. And anyway, he has not even been capped by Sussex yet, so talk of him succeeding for England has to be a touch premature to say the least.

With his feet planted firmly on the ground, some six and a half feet below his head, Martin-Jenkins makes it clear he is under no illusions. "I need to do a full year in county cricket which, provided I am picked, should be this coming season," he said.

"Traditionally coaches and the press get very excited when a youngster does well in their first half year talking about their potential as an England player only to find a couple of years later that they have not progressed. I just would not know. I need to bowl and bat against the best, then I will find out. Right now I am quite happy to be underrated rather than overrated." When pushed, though, Martin-Jenkins admitted: "Quietly I would back myself to succeed."

No one, it would seem had real-

ly pushed him much as a youngster. For all his father's ability at club level, the pushing was to come a lot later in Martin-Jenkins' formative years.

He said: "My father has been a very big influence, encouraging me from the moment I first picked up a bat. He went out of his way to make sure I had the best coaching around and the best opportunities. Like a lot of parents he has driven me all over the country as a youngster taking me to matches and festivals. Yet he never pushed me to go on. It is something that happened naturally."

"Although we have never actually discussed it, I think he was desperate for me to make it in the game. One gets that impression. He is delighted when I do well and he asks me all sorts of questions about life as a professional cricketer."

The push came to shove while Martin-Jenkins was in his second year at Durham. He became a part of the Durham Academy, coming under the harder-nosed, highly intelligent influence of former Lancashire and England opener Graeme "Foxy" Fowler.

"I only really benefited in my second year at the academy, which was last year," said Martin-Jenkins. "But

even in that short time there I felt much better prepared for the season with Sussex. And I did not feel I was losing out in the professional game by being at university. In future people at Durham University will find, thanks to the academy, that their cricket will not suffer. They will come out at the end with a degree and their playing career should have progressed."

"From a personal point of view Foxy has definitely helped me grow up in the game," acknowledged Martin-Jenkins. "The academy, though, helps everyone to get into a professional frame of mind. Foxy is good at the mental side of the game, while obviously the technical side of coaching there is also very good."

David Gilbert, now general manager at Hove, saw a huge difference in Martin-Jenkins. "He was harder," remembered Gilbert, the former Australian Test fast bowler. "They brought out his competitive side. There was suddenly an edge to his game."

He managed one Championship match during his Easter vacation when he scored a second-innings 63 and had three victims in a two-wicket win over Lancashire. He also has a modicum of success in the Sunday League match against the same opponents, although Sussex lost that game, which was played under floodlights.

Martin-Jenkins is still young



Buckling down: Martin-Jenkins wants county career Peter Jay

enough and new enough in the game to marvel at how his life is panning out. "I took a year off school [Radley] and university and I got caught up in the excitement of it all. Just to be a professional cricketer was amazing," he said.

However far he goes, Martin-Jenkins has the wherewithal and the attitude. Already he is beginning to make a name for himself. It is surely just a matter of time before a little hit of history is created - father doing commentary on his son.

Olazabal takes the slow route

Greatest talent?

ABOUT THE only remaining person in golf who believes the sport should have an off-season longer than the two-week Christmas and New Year break is Jose Maria Olazabal. It's hard to prise the Spaniard away from his San Sebastian home in the Basque country at this time of year and it is hardly a surprise that he has not joined the lemming-like rush down to South Africa for the start of the 1999 European Tour on Thursday.

Olazabal's season will not get under way until the Dubai Classic next month, where he will be the defending champion, but he did get on a plane last week. It was only an internal flight down to Malaga, where he popped in on the MacGregor Training Week to see his old coach, John Jacobs.

The veteran swing guru is

the only man Olazabal has ever listened to about his own particularly rapid action.

Top of the agenda was his problem driving the ball, one that outside observers find hard to detect but which causes the perfectionist inside Olie to find a constant source of

"And I'd love to hole as many putts from 15 feet as you, Jose."

One of the other reason why Olazabal thinks the majority of his 1998 season did not live up to a promising start was not having a proper break last winter. "I only had 10 days off before I started practising again to play the early events of the season," he said. "By June and July I was feeling very tired."

The former Masters champion has the option to pick and choose his assignments. He does not have to worry about retaining his player's card or chasing Ryder Cup points,

which will come in abundance with a few top finishes.

For those officially invited to the European Tour Training School, the new recruits from the Qualifying School and the Challenge Tour; the same does not apply. Immediately on getting back from Spain on Sunday, John Bickerton was on a plane to Johannesburg for the South African PGA.

Bickerton, who turns 30 later this month, is used to a busy schedule. At one point last season he played 22 consecutive weeks, trying to combine a limited number of appearances on the main circuit with the Chal-

lenge Tour, where he managed to secure his card for the real thing. "You have to keep going because you're thinking the next week might be the big one."

He considered pulling out of the British Masters because he was shattered but was persuaded to carry on and finished eighth, his best result on the European Tour. Having lost his card after two seasons in 1996, Bickerton feels more prepared this time.

"I have learnt not to set too many goals," he said. "In the past I found that obstructive because you end up thinking

more about the goals than just playing golf."

This was Bickerton's third visit to the MacGregor Week and though the idea is that players do well enough never to return - Vijay Singh became the first graduate to win a major championship at the USPGA last August - Bickerton found it just as valuable as his first visit. "I would come every year if I was invited," he said. "I can't believe more players who have the opportunity don't come. If you take away one thing in each aspect of the game, then it is worth it."

By far the biggest draw is Jorgen Aker holed six-iron for an albatross two at the infamous 17th, but the hole was only playing 450 yards and will be converted to a par-four by the time the American Express World Championship is staged at the former Ryder Cup venue in November.

The scientific approach to the game is all very well but things



Olazabal: Too little rest

can get out of hand. Mac O'Grady, the eccentric 47-year-old American who ruffled a few feathers when he won his card at the Qualifying School, was not at San Roque, but the word is that he is considering having two inches taken out of his legs. O'Grady has made a thorough study of the physiology of the golf swing and one of the main conclusions of his research is, apparently, that the ideal height for a golfer is 5ft 10in.

Rusedski frustrated by Kuerten

GREG RUSEDSKI'S bad start to 1999 continued yesterday when he went out in the first round of the Sydney International. The British No 2's 1-6, 6-3, 6-4 defeat by Gustavo Kuerten was his second consecutive first-round defeat in the opening two ATP tournaments of the year.

Last week, Rusedski was beaten in his match against the German Bernd Kirschbaum in the Qatar Open, losing 4-6, 7-6, 6-3, while his British rival, Tim Henman, reached the final.

At least the Brazilian Kuerten is a recognised star of the tour with a French Open title under his belt, but with Rusedski seeded five, and ranked nine in the world, it was still an upset.

Rusedski, who now goes into next week's Australian Open in Melbourne with just two competitive matches under his belt since the end of last season, was calm after his latest setback, however: "There's nothing to be negative about, nothing to be down about it," Rusedski said. "Kuerten just played a great match, he was just too good."

The US Open champion, Patrick Rafter, was another player who squandered the chance of vital match practice before next week's Australian Open when he lost 7-6, 6-1 to the teenager Lleyton Hewitt in the first round of the Sydney International.

Hewitt has a particular liking for big scalps. When he won the Adelaide Hardcourt Championships last year at the age of 16 he beat the former world No 1 Andre Agassi on the way.

TENNIS
BY JOHN BROCK

The young Australian counter-puncher managed to keep a rusty Rafter on the move throughout, forcing him into repeated errors, and never allowed the world No 4 to stamp any authority on the match. After four breaks of service in the opening set, Hewitt took it easily on the tie-break 7-1.

Hewitt was too strong for Rafter in the second set, rifling winners past the second seed. He broke service twice to seal victory in 81 minutes. Hewitt now faces Nicolas Kiefer of Germany in the second round.

Rafter was second-round loser to the Czech Slava Dosedel at the Adelaide tournament and yesterday's defeat means he will line up in Melbourne having played only three matches after returning from a two-month lay-off with a knee injury. "My concentration slipped. It was a little hit up and down," Rafter said.

Speaking of his problems playing in Australia - he has never progressed beyond the fourth round in seven Australian Opens - Rafter said: "It's always a pretty big issue for me and I don't think it will change. I've always struggled at home."

In the women's event, the former women's No 1 Martina Hingis was in typically devastating form as she disposed of another promising Australian teenager, Alicia Molik, 6-1, 6-2.

Molik, 17, had beaten the world No 16 Natasha Zvereva in the first round after gaining a wild card entry.



Greg Rusedski plays a backhand in his second successive first-round defeat, to Gustavo Kuerten in Sydney yesterday

Clive Brunskill/Allsport

Hingis, the world No 2, produced a clinical display to beat Molik in her opening match of the tournament. She broke the Australian's first two service games on the way to a 5-0 lead in the first set and then pushed the tall Molik around the court at will in the second to wrap up victory in under an hour.

"I was concentrating very well today and played almost without mistakes," said Hingis, who will be defending her Australian Open title next week.

Spain's Conchita Martinez, seeded five, lost in straight sets to the Austrian, Barbara Schett.

The men's world No 2, Marcelo Rios, dropped out of

the ATP tournament in Auckland yesterday just 45 minutes into his first-round match.

A recurrence of a back injury which troubled him at the end of last year was apparently the reason for his withdrawal. The Chilean was the top seed at the Heineken Auckland Open.

Rios had won the first set of

his match against the Romanian Andre Pavel 7-5, but when he was broken in the second game of the second set - refusing to chase a ball on break point - he withdrew to the locker-room to receive treatment for back pain.

In the second round of the Tasmanian International

women's event in Hobart, Ruzanna Dragozar became the third seed to be beaten. The Romanian, seeded seven, had no answer to Grande's big forehand and crisp volleying and the Italian, who has been out of the game with a back injury, achieved a comprehensive 6-1, 6-3 victory.

Honour, defeat and our malaise

Sir: An American friend of mine rang me to make a point that he has made many times in the past decade. As long as we, the British, continue to welcome home beaten teams as though there was something honourable and even creditable in defeat, then we are never going to be a nation of sporting winners.

Over the past three months the English cricket team has performed feebly. They have shown a total lack of the ability to be tough and be real winners. After we had lost the Ashes I rang my friend in New York and predicted that we would win the next Test. Sure enough, when nothing was at stake, we won. When are we going to understand that winning a Test match once the Ashes have been lost is close to no achievement at all?

Do we really believe that if the Ashes had been up for grabs the Australians would have lost in Melbourne?

There were three headlines in *The Independent* regarding our latest apathetic efforts in Sydney, and the series as a whole. "Stewart's men earn respect for a courageous performance"; 188 all out - a courageous performance? "Honour has been salvaged." How? Where? When? There is no honour in defeat.

"England captain has emerged with credit for rediscovered fighting spirit."

Just because a couple of our bowlers actually managed to live up to, or maybe even slightly surpass, their potential does not excuse the rest of the team for four matches of under-achievement and a total lack of spirit.

Delusion is a malaise that we, as a sporting nation, have suffered from for too long. In football we went out with great honour at Italia 90, were robbed at Euro 96 and to add insult to our failure, Glenn Hoddle tells us that if David Beckham hadn't been sent off we would have gone on to win the World Cup. How do we react to this? We renew his contract. In America, he would not have had time to board the plane home before being sacked, and rightly so.

It is time to wake up... defeat is defeat. Whether it is by one run, one goal, one wicket or a penalty, it is still defeat and defeat is failure. Ninety per cent of our touring cricket team should hang their heads in shame for their lack of guts, but we let them off the hook by covering them in "honour", "courage" and "fighting spirit".

Surely it is time that we recognise this embarrassing British trait

and did away with it. We want to be winners and we want to welcome our sportsmen back with praise and honour, but they have to actually deserve such accolades.

JOHN BATTSEK
London

Playing fields must be forever

Sir: Following our ignominious Ashes defeat, it is not surprising that some armchair critics have the problem solved. At the risk of joining this mob, may I make a couple of observations.

It is not just cricket that we should be concerned about. I have been a governor of a number of schools and colleges over the past 25 years, during which there has been a worrying policy of flogging of playing fields and, indeed, school sites to developers.

It will take a good number of years yet for many of our major team sports to recover from this short-term policy of eating the seed corn. No doubt we will recover - we always do - but it would be nice if the nutters were not quite so profligate with our assets.

BRIAN CLANCY
Altringham, Cheshire

Rich and tired - what a strain

Sir: What is the world coming to? A fortnight ago the Leicester City manager, Martin O'Neill, was complaining that his (presumably well paid) players are "tired", having played two games over three days during the Christmas holiday.

Then today (7 January)

we hear that Robbie Fowler has rejected a contract worth £35,000 a week. I despair... I am a nurse, regularly pay good money to watch football and players who wouldn't get out of bed for what I earn, and am expected to cry into my cornflakes for managers and players alike! Get into the real world, fellas!

RICHARD HUGHES
Southwark, London

International pool for referees

Sir: I wondered if Richard Williams ("Red mist for the men in black", 31 December) had considered a European "scheme" in which referees could be pooled to take charge of games in Europe. Such use of officials works well in European competitions and could work successfully in individual national premier leagues.

Following the rapid "internationalisation" of the Premiership (in players, coaches, managers), I suggest that this route should be considered as well as professional referees. Such a proposal would also improve our own refereeing standards by allowing them more European experience. As a referee of 10 years

experience, it is important to recognise the conservatism of the Football Association, but there is some hope that refereeing is beginning, albeit slowly, to move from mid-20th century postures to football reality of 1999.

RICHARD SKELLINGTON
Stony Stratford,
Milton Keynes

No sense in sales policy at Palace

Sir: After Michael Owen, Matt Jansen is the most exciting young forward in the country. Don't just take that from Crystal Palace fans like me: ask Peter Taylor, manager of the England Under-21 team, or Four Four Two magazine, which recently voted him the best striker outside the Premiership.

Jansen had the chance last season to join Manchester United but chose instead to come to Palace, despite the fact that relegation from the Premiership looked likely. He recently signed a new long-term contract, says he enjoys working under Terry Venables and has apparently moved into a new home near the club's training ground. So why on earth are Palace

contemplating selling him to Newcastle United?

We Palace supporters are

lucky to have a side that is

so good, but the club's

policy of selling off the

best players is a disaster.

SUE DONATO
Croydon

Varsity teams not in right spirit

Sir: Is it not high time that the annual Cambridge v Oxford rugby union match became more, instead of less, true to the spirit of student rugby? At the risk of being proved wrong by your correspondent Alan Watkins, a contemporary of mine at

Cambridge in the 1950s, I seem to recall that the teams then were drawn mainly from young undergraduates, with only the occasional graduate "star" who had previously played at a higher level. The reverse seems to be the case today when

when quite a number of the

players are in their mid-twenties, half frequently

from Commonwealth countries, have often already made their mark in club, national or even

international rugby and may only be university for a short time to enable them to study for various post-graduate qualifications.

It must be frustrating for those who have shown a great deal of talent at school or college level to realise that their chances of gaining a Blue at this sport are almost as unlikely as a fall of snow in the Sahara.

Would it not be better for the respective sides to be picked solely from undergraduates between the ages of, say, 18 and 22? The spectacle for the paying public might not be quite so attractive (though that is debatable) but at least the resultant match would give the appearance of being a more genuine contest between representatives of these two ancient universities.

Incidentally, the same

remarks could probably be

made with regard to the Boat Race.

ANDREW J WOFFENDEN
Marple,
Stockport, Cheshire

SPORTS LETTERS

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'Guilty' RFU told to name its sentence

MORE AND more curious. No sooner had the controversial merger between Bristol and London Scottish hit the first of what could be a series of legal buffers than the International Rugby Board, which seldom passes up an opportunity to further disrupt a sport that already feels disrupted out, threw another political spanner into the union works. The IRB revealed they had found the Rugby Football Union guilty of "conduct prejudicial to the interests of the board" - a judgement that could, to theory at least, have far-reaching consequences for the England national team.

Twickenham found itself in the IRB dock before Christmas over its response to a European Commission complaint filed by the professional English clubs, who want to establish a raft of commercial rights under EC competition law.

A month on, the board's disciplinary committee has reached its verdict, although its

RUGBY UNION

By CHRIS HEWETT

members were not quite bold enough to impose a punishment for fear of finding themselves in the nearest civil court. Bizarrely enough, they have asked the RFU to suggest its own sanction, to be considered by the board tomorrow week.

An IRB statement accused the RFU of concealing details of its EC response, despite earlier assurances of "absolute and unqualified support", and continued: "We found this unaccountable change in attitude to be inappropriate conduct that board members could properly condemn." Having already denied the RFU \$60,000 in grant money because of the English clubs' rebel matches with Cardiff and Swansea, the board now has the choice of imposing a direct fine, suspending England from Test competition or expelling the union from the international community.

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That last comment would have been greeted by derisive laughter in the committee rooms of Twickenham, although the public response from the RFU was deafeningly silent. The union has acted on its own legal advice throughout this affair and the QCs will no doubt be in action again tomorrow when senior officials consider the judgement at a management committee meeting.

Meanwhile, the extraordinary attempt by Bristol to buy their way back into a top flight from which they were relegated last season by taking over London Scottish, appeared to have stalled last night. Both Tony Tiarks, the major shareholder behind the financially fragile Exiles, and Nick de Scossa, the Bristol chief executive, were meeting with union and club officials yesterday when news broke of a rival bid, tabled by London Scottish supporters enraged by the developments of the last few days. Given that company law obliges Tiarks to consider all bids, the process will likely be more drawn out than De Scossa imagined.

Along the A4 at Bath, Andy Robinson's fading champions received another setback yesterday when the local council refused to grant the club's request for a four-year extended lease arrangement at the Recreation Ground. Although Bath can play matches at their home ground until mid-May, there is no guarantee that they will be allowed to do so again.

The quiet spoken Briton, who has won four races while Scheidt has taken just one, has a 14-point overall lead on the Brazilian and said: "I thought it would be a bit tighter than this, but he is not taking anything for granted."

Ainslie won yesterday's first race and saw both Scheidt and the Australian Michael Blackburn struggle in the shifty, softer winds and know he will need all his concentration to ensure he does not fall into the same trap. "This is the big one for '99, the one I want to do

SAILING

By STUART ALEXANDER

In Melbourne

well in," he said. And is it a step to the Olympics in Sydney next year? "No," he said, "Sydney is still a long way off and the conditions at an Olympics will be different. At the moment I am not sailing towards Sydney. I am sailing each event as it comes. And I want to defend my European title in Helsinki at the end of August."

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the Finn class to stay third overall - he was not helped by a 20th in the first race of the day - and he is the only one in the top 12 to have scored a win."

The 49ers, still managing to capsize regularly and recovering from three broken masts and a bent boom in the squalls of Monday, continue their lengthy, 12-race qualifying process, which should finish today.

Britain hopes for four, maybe five, boats in the gold fleet, which then embarks on another 12-race series to decide the world champion over the next three days. Top of the British pile last night were the Budgen brothers, Andy disappointed at lying seventh overall. "We were consistently average today," he said.

The southerly winds, blowing at seven to 12 knots, suited the Soling trio of Andy Beadsworth, Barry Parkin and newcomer Richard Sydenham. "We are quick in the lighter

stuff," Beadsworth had said, and so it proved as they won the fourth race and pulled themselves up to sixth overall. Just as important psychologically was that they regained the advantage over British rivals Lawrie Smith and his 1992 bronze medal crew of Rob Cruikshank and Ossie Stewart.

Smith, 14th yesterday and 11th overall, makes light of putting in a serious bid for his third Olympic place, saying: "The number one objective was to come to Australia and do some regattas, and to keep up with the game. But if we finish in the top 10 we have the option to carry on and even if the America's Cup happens, we will probably carry on anyway. If everything went well we might even consider going for the Olympic team trials."

He did not wish to comment about the America's Cup except to mention talks to bring in a major sponsor, saying:

"Remember the primary rule. Where is the money?"

Whoever wins the Soling Championship will have earned it. "This is as good a fleet as I have ever seen," said keelboat coach, Bill Edgerton. "There are no marshmallows out there, none with a soft centre." With Denmark's Stig Westergaard setting the pace, chased by triple gold medallist Jochen Schneemann, Edgerton also pointed to the pace of 1996 Finn bronze medalist and 1998 Whitbread skipper Roy Heiner of the Netherlands. "He is running hot," he said.

Mike Golding has withdrawn from the Around Alone race as the damage to his 51m 60ft Team Group 4, sustained while leading the race, was too great to allow him to complete the final two legs from Auckland to Charlestown, South Carolina.

Results, Sporting Digest, page 25



The Soling World Championship fleet make an impressive sight with spinnakers billowing in the third heat in Melbourne yesterday

AFP

Ainslie has world title in sight

BEN AINSLIE is just two races away from winning the Laser World Championship to give Britain a flying start today in the seven Olympic classes holding their world title regattas at Port Phillip Bay. The 21-year-old, now based in Lymington, yesterday doubled his lead on his nearest rival, the Brazilian Robert Scheidt, who pipped him for gold at the Atlanta Games.

The quietly spoken Briton, who has won four races while Scheidt has taken just one, has a 14-point overall lead on the Brazilian and said: "I thought it would be a bit tighter than this, but he is not taking anything for granted."

Ainslie won yesterday's first race and saw both Scheidt and the Australian Michael Blackburn struggle in the shifty, softer winds and know he will need all his concentration to ensure he does not fall into the same trap. "This is the big one for '99, the one I want to do

the Finn class to stay third overall - he was not helped by a 20th in the first race of the day - and he is the only one in the top 12 to have scored a win."

The 49ers, still managing to capsize regularly and recovering from three broken masts and a bent boom in the squalls of Monday, continue their lengthy, 12-race qualifying process, which should finish today.

Britain hopes for four, maybe five, boats in the gold fleet, which then embarks on another 12-race series to decide the world champion over the next three days. Top of the British pile last night were the Budgen brothers, Andy disappointed at lying seventh overall. "We were consistently average today," he said.

The southerly winds, blowing at seven to 12 knots, suited the Soling trio of Andy Beadsworth, Barry Parkin and newcomer Richard Sydenham. "We are quick in the lighter

stuff," Beadsworth had said, and so it proved as they won the fourth race and pulled themselves up to sixth overall. Just as important psychologically was that they regained the advantage over British rivals Lawrie Smith and his 1992 bronze medal crew of Rob Cruikshank and Ossie Stewart.

Smith, 14th yesterday and 11th overall, makes light of putting in a serious bid for his third Olympic place, saying: "The number one objective was to come to Australia and do some regattas, and to keep up with the game. But if we finish in the top 10 we have the option to carry on and even if the America's Cup happens, we will probably carry on anyway. If everything went well we might even consider going for the Olympic team trials."

He did not wish to comment about the America's Cup except to mention talks to bring in a major sponsor, saying:

TOMORROW

CAN COLIN MONTGOMERIE KEEP HIS CROWN FOR A SEVENTH YEAR IN SUCCESSION? ANDY FARRELL LOOKS AT THE START OF THE EUROPEAN GOLF TOUR

Reading man given key job

HOCKEY
BY BILL COLWILL

Pickersgill, announcing the appointment yesterday, said: "We are delighted to welcome Richard to English hockey. We are especially pleased to be able to have found a chief executive with the calibre and experience to undertake a challenging role at this stage in the sport's history."

"He has a proven pedigree as a motivational team leader in a changing environment as well as being a skilled manager."

TODAY'S NUMBER

20m

The number of guilders (£6.5m) the Spanish football club Barcelona agreed to pay yesterday to Ajax of Amsterdam for their Dutch international defender Frank de Boer. Barcelona have been chasing Frank and his brother Ronald all season.

His career in the game has included spells at Swindon, and Old Tantamount, where he was also coach and chairman, an initial period at the Rustlers at Reading and Sydney's Northern Districts, where he also became coach.

He has been in charge of Reading for the past six years, during which time they have both won league and cup honours.

The EHA president, Monica

WOLVERHAMPTON

HYPERION

1.00 Monchamps 1.30 Sotonian 2.00 Sue Me 2.35 La Plaza 3.05 Holy Smoke 3.40 Burning 4.10 Sudwest (rub)

GOWING: Standard. STALLS: Inside. DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low. Final: 1st left-hand, oval course.

■ Course is N of town on A448. Wolverhampton station. ADMISSION: Club £15; Tattersalls £3; £2 off for DAP members of Diamond Club; Restaurant package prices £1750 to £3595 including course entrance and race car park free.

LEADING TRAINERS: R Hollands 46-48 (Rub); M Johnson 44-25 (Sud); P Evans 40-37 (Sotonian); N Lutmon 38-39 (Hyperion).

LEADING JOCKEYS: S Sanders 43-51 (Sotonian); Dean McNaughton 39-42 (Hyperion); J Moore 34-40 (Holy); T Holland 31-33 (Sudwest).

FAVOURITES: 4.00 Sudwest; 3.00 Monchamps; 2.50 Sotonian.

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Maclean (Sud).

STABLES: Inside.

GOING: Standard. STALLS: Inside. DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low. Final: 1st left-hand, oval course.

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STABLES: Inside.

Focused England stick to game plan

ANY COACH whose side has knocked over their most formidable foes and the world champions in tight contests on consecutive days has a right to suspect his strategy may be bearing fruit. David Lloyd played it deadpan.

"I still think there's more to come," he said. "I want them to be more in the face than they are, to hustle more." He must have been repeating these phrases from some limited edition volume available only to those in the occupation of preparing sportsmen for battle. It is quite obviously a private language but a rough translation in this instance is that England must maintain their concentration and refuse to be distracted by any little plays the opposition might pull.

Lloyd is making the demands of his charges in the wake of the back-to-back victories in Brisbane over first Australia and then Sri Lanka in the Carlton & United Series. His

CRICKET

BY STEPHEN BRENKLEY
In Melbourne

cautious response to the unlikely scenario that they would be two up after two with eight to play probably derived from the fact that he has been with England for long enough to know that you can come from behind when it is too late, as they have done frequently, then peaking too soon should be a doddle.

But England have paraded some important qualities of stoicism and nerve this week which are invaluable if close one-dayers are to be won. It augurs well that they have done so while both bowling second and batting second.

Australia were behind but never quite out of it last Sunday with Michael Bevan the most proficient one-day batsman around, still in. Having done the hard work early England did

not let it slip. If the bowing stayed accurate the fielding was tigerish.

The run out of Shane Warne by Mark Alleyne, moving sharply and gracefully to his weaker side, was a lovely example of accuracy under severe pressure. Alleyne was not only making his debut at the age of 30 but earlier in the evening had made a hash of fielding a ball, twice slipping and stumbling over as he recovered it, much to the crowd's cruel amusement.

Norman Wiseman to Fred Astaire is never an easy transformation to pull off but Alleyne did it.

On the following evening Sri Lanka should have made more than 207 and England should have passed the total more easily. There was some concern that it would rain which briefly required more haste than the pursuers would have liked but at the last they retained enough of their composure. Muttiah

Muralitharan almost created havoc, just running out of overs in time. But it was again to Alleyne's credit that, despite being utterly mystified, a man who looked as though he was trying to enter Fort Knox with a nail file and wondering why the lock wouldn't turn, still kept plodding patiently on. The return Neil Fairbrother, of course, did the rest.

It is rare for a side to win twice on successive nights at Brisbane in this series, not least because of the oppressive heat. To do so in such close matches as England did shows the side have fight left in them. Coming so soon after another Ashes series which might not have been a decisive win but which was nevertheless won and lost comfortably has dismayed but

not angered the Australian public, which is hardly besotted with its own team at present.

Betting scandals are part of the reason, but there is also a distinct impression that they feel the players have become too big for their boots. In Australia they cut tall poppies down.

This has not prevented immense interest in the series. The Gabba has been packed on three occasions. More than 17,000 watched Queensland play England last Friday and Australia play England on Sunday, while more than 12,000 turned up to watch England against Sri Lanka. The first meeting between Sri Lanka and the hosts at Sydney was a 40,000 sell-out and nearly 80,000 are expected in Melbourne on Friday for England v Australia, part two.

England's strategy for the World Cup in England in May is already in place, if not the personnel. That, Lloyd explained, was the thinking behind using as many players as they had lately. They wanted to examine different individuals for similar roles, to find first-choices and possible replacements. Their work may be nearly done.

"The old dressing room adage is go at 10 an over for the first 15 overs with the fielding restrictions, don't take any risks and don't lose any wickets," said Lloyd, conjuring up a kind of one-day Elysian field. "The other teams all want to do the same, score quickly at first, consolidate in the middle while the board ticks over, and hit at the end. But you've got to find the players to do it."

England are relaxed, a mood which always pervades a winning team, so there is still time for them to be exceedingly teetzy by next week. But the Ashes genuinely seem to have been put behind them.

"Maybe it was a fluke with the players coming from the Test side but we had a word and there hasn't been any looking backwards," Lloyd said.

Fast forward to taking on Australia in front of 80,000 at the MCG on Friday then and you cannot get much more in your face than that.

IOC stands by Salt Lake City

THE International Olympic Committee confirmed yesterday that the 2002 Winter Games would remain with Salt Lake City despite allegations of bribery and corruption levelled at some of the organisers.

Officials in the American city have admitted paying for the housing, travel and education of relatives of IOC members as well as giving expensive gifts and free health care. Yesterday the IOC spokeswoman Michele Verdier said: "The IOC has made it clear the Games will not be withdrawn from Salt Lake City."

She added that a suggestion by Switzerland's veteran IOC member Marc Hodler that the city might lose the Games because of a \$350m (£216m) shortfall resulting from the scandal were made in a personal capacity and she denied there were financial problems.

Hodler, 80, started the furor when he said last month that agents offered candidates blocks of votes for millions of dollars. Following his comments and reports of inducements allegedly offered to some of the IOC members involved in the selection, the president of the Salt Lake City Organising Committee and his deputy resigned.

The president in question, Tom Welch, has admitted he had a £230,000 fund to finance offerings to Olympic officials worldwide. Welch was forced to stand down in August 1997, after being charged with financial abuse. He admitted giving £23,000 to Jean-Claude Ganga, an IOC member from the Republic of Congo, who said he needed money to help his homeland's children fight civil strife. But Welch claimed: "We never bribed anybody. We never bought a vote."

The IOC has launched its own internal investigation on the corruption charges, and

OLYMPIC GAMES

BY ROBERT EVANS

Verdier said the results of these would be released after an executive board meeting on 24 or 25 January. The IOC president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, speaking in Warsaw, promised to punish any IOC members implicated in the scandal. "We are going to act very fast," he is reported to have told members of Poland's Olympic Committee. "If it turns out the behaviour of some IOC members was reprehensible they will have to bear the consequences."

There have been claims that up to 12 members of the IOC may be forced to resign once the investigations are complete. But a leading member of the Sydney 2000 Games organising committee has called on Samaranch to ignore calls for his own resignation. Samaranch has come under fire from the former New South Wales Olympics minister Bruce Baird.

But Australian IOC member Phil Coles, who yesterday resigned from his consultancy role with the hotel group due to house Olympic officials in Sydney, said: "He won't resign, and we don't want him to. I've been saying all along... if there's a half-dozen corrupt politicians the prime minister doesn't resign."

Baird warned Samaranch "the buck always stops with someone" but says Sydney bid officials never went as far as to provide and pay for prostitutes for IOC members, as Salt Lake City bid organisers allegedly did.

Meanwhile, René Paquet, the former head of the Quebec City bid committee which lost out to Salt Lake City, says the Canadian city may sue the IOC because the rules on the bid contract were broken.



Andrew Freshwater wins the downhill event of the British Land National Alpine Ski Championships in Tignes, France, yesterday

Knights aim to ride out Storm

ICE HOCKEY

THE LONDON Knights coach, Jim Fyarchuk, believes Manchester Storm can be beaten despite a seemingly relentless march towards the Seconda Superleague title.

Storm are six points clear and have a game in hand on the second-placed Cardiff Devils, whose challenge has faltered in recent weeks with five defeats in their last six games.

Manchester's lead has been built on the back of five successive victories and a record-breaking 18-match winning run at the MEN Arena. But Fyarchuk, whose Knights team prop up the league and have the second-worst home record behind Bracknell Bees, refuses to concede the title race is over and that tonight's game at the Docklands Arena is a foregone conclusion.

He said: "I think they can be stopped from winning the league title. Why not? There are so many things that could go wrong. The roof could cave in on them just like it did to us. You get half a dozen injuries and all of a sudden it changes the whole complexion of the line-up."

"You then get a bit of bad luck, a couple of bad bounces, you drop a couple of games and then the momentum is taken away. But they've got great strength in depth, great balance, they're playing with confidence, while we're riddled with inconsistency."

"If we can put together a couple of wins it adds to our own confidence and we generate our own momentum again."

"People will be looking at the game and thinking Manchester will win, but nothing would be sweeter than coming up with an upset win over them. It's about time somebody did."

The other game tonight is Ayr Scottish Eagles at home to Sheffield Steelers, who are still involved in takeover talks with two potential buyers.

Maier denies Raich's slalom hat-trick

SKIING

BY STEVE KEATING

HERMANN MAIER kept his word and held his nerve in Adelboden, Switzerland, yesterday to win a World Cup giant slalom ahead of his team-mate Benjamin Raich.

Austria's Olympic champion had promised retribution after finishing third in a giant slalom on his home hill in Flachau on Sunday behind the victorious newcomer, Raich. Maier kept his pledge by collecting his sixth victory of the season.

It was his second giant slalom victory of the season and his second in two years on Adelboden's treacherous Knoniberg piste, with a two-run combined time of 2min 12.66sec.

Boredom set in for the first leg and chasing his third win in six days - had to settle for third, with 2:13.14.

Bothered by a sore back that forced him to take

painkillers before the race, Maier admitted he had been considering skipping the next races in Wengen and Kitzbühel to rest before next month's World Championships in Vail, Colorado. However, with Aamodt so close behind, the former bricklayer said he would talk to the team doctors.

"I'm not sure about my programme - I'll make a decision this evening," said Maier, who leads the overall rankings with 911 points, 228 clear of Aamodt. "I have to think seriously about it because Aamodt is so close now."

Switzerland's Michael Von Gruenigen retained the lead

from Maier in the giant slalom standings by two points.

Second after the first leg, Maier was at his best on his second run down the piste, showing no signs of pain or discomfort to record 1:06.86.

Raich also charged down the course but a costly error near the start of his run denied the 20-year-old another victory.

"I had no problem with the pressure," shrugged Raich, a five-time junior world champion. "I've raced from the front before and know that kind of pressure. I'm just pleased to be on the podium after making a mistake at the top of the course."

RESULTS. DIGEST, page 25

Until yesterday's victory, the slightly built Raich had overshadowed the powerful Maier through the first few weeks of 1999.

Raich, who claimed his maiden World Cup win in a giant slalom in Schladming last Thursday before a giant slalom victory in Flachau, had suddenly found himself at the centre of media attention.

"I had no problem with the pressure," said Maier. "His success takes pressure away from me. I've had less work to do away from the podium after making a mistake at the top of the course."

RESULTS. DIGEST, page 25

Court to set Sailor sum

RUGBY LEAGUE

THE AUSTRALIAN Test winger Wendell Sailor is facing a High Court damages award after renegotiating a deal to play for Wigan.

The former Brisbane Bronco, now playing for the London Knights, signed a two-year deal with Wigan 12 months ago but then changed his mind after his return to Australia.

Wigan took the case to court and Sailor failed to contest the action, claiming he knew nothing of the move.

Sailor, who was hoping to settle out of court, could be back home in Brisbane by the time of the hearing. He will play his

final home game for Leeds in Sunday's Allied Dunbar Premiership Two fixture with Wigan and is expected to complete his three-month stint in the Teddington's Bitter Cup fifth round tie at Leicester on 30 January.

Wigan had threatened to take out an injunction to prevent Sailor turning out against them for Leeds Rhinos in the Grand Final last October but, in the event, he was not selected.

■ Ford will sponsor the First Division for the 1999 season.

Syme goes through with ease

BOWLS

SANDY SYME, last year's Scottish champion, eased through to the second round of the World Indoor Championship in Hopton-on-Sea, Norfolk, yesterday, with a straight sets victory over Guernsey's Paul Ingrouille.

Syme survived a slow start to beat Ingrouille, a late replacement for his fellow Channel Islander Adrian Welch. Ingrouille started well and

and trailed 0-5 in the second before recovering to win 7-6.

"That really got to me - I thought I should have been two sets to nothing up and I had nothing to show for dominating Collett up to that point."

Greenslade then restricted Collett to just one set as he won 7-2 before repeating the scoreline in the next to seal his success.

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The report ad

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

7.30 unless stated

FA CUP

(Sponsored by AXA)

THIRD ROUND REPLAYS

Fulham v Southampton (7.45)

Leeds v Rushden & Diamonds (7.45) ...

Swindon v West Ham (7.45) ...

SECOND ROUND

Queen's Park v Cheltenham (7.45) ...

SECOND ROUND DISPLAYS

Stringer v Montrouge ...

SCOTTISH LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION

Airdrie v Greenock Morton (7.45) ...

Partick v Alloa (7.45) ...

FA CARLSBERG VASE FOURTH ROUND

Bowers v Woodbridge (or Birkby Town FC) ...

CALOR COUNTY ANTRIM SHIELD

Plan Atkinson makes Palmer a priority

FOOTBALL

BY RUPERT METCALF

sea's 2-0 victory at The Dell on Boxing Day.

Ian Wright was last night undergoing an operation on his knee. The West Ham striker, who damaged his cartilage during the FA Cup third-round tie at home to Swansea, is likely to be out for four to six weeks.

The Bolton Wanderers manager, Colin Todd, has accused Arnar Gunnlaugsson of "pure greed" after the Icelandic striker rejected the club's new contract offer. "He's advised by his agent that he can get a certain number of pounds and that seems to be what he's holding out for - but we've made our final offer," Todd said. "We are not in the Premiership, we are a First Division club."

Sheffield Wednesday's Northern Ireland international midfielder Jim Magilton has joined Ipswich Town on a month's loan, and will make his debut in the First Division game at Sunderland on Sunday.

Sheffield United's former Everton midfielder, John Ebbrell, has been forced to retire to a ankle injury.

The Aston Villa manager, John Gregory, has received a boost with the news that the club's backers are ready to support his quest to sign Juninho, Atletico Madrid's unsettled Brazilian forward.

Villa's financial director, Mark Ansell, said: "The board have already confirmed to John Gregory that should the players become available that he wants them to bank on our support. It is down to the fantastic success of the last 12 months that makes it even more possible to support further purchasing of players."

Gregory, who has spent £21m in the last six months, knows that he may have to spend over £10m to bring Juninho, once of Middlesbrough, back to England.

Chelsea's influential midfielder Gustavo Poyet has been ruled out of action for three months. The Uruguayan is recovering from knee surgery after damaging medial ligaments following a challenge by Southampton's Moroccan forward Hassan Kachlouf in Chel-

ton. Stott intends to concentrate on his campaign to become chairman of the Football Association, following his resignation as Oldham Athletic's chairman.

Stott stood down on Monday following a board meeting at Boundary Park, when he admitted causing the club embarrassment over his claims that the Latics were in merger talks with their neighbours, Bury and Rochdale. All three clubs were quick to deny Stott's claims that secret negotiations were taking place.

Goram signs for Motherwell



Peter Shreeves (right), Nottingham Forest's new assistant manager, has the players smiling in his first training session yesterday Empics

Leeds' injury problems mount

BY IAN PARKES

DAVID RATTY, the Leeds United midfielder, will be out of action for at least another month because of his rib injury, it was revealed yesterday.

Batty, who was the first signing of the new Leeds manager, David O'Leary, broke a rib on his debut in his return to the club - the 2-0 home win over Coventry on December 14. The news comes before tonight's FA Cup third-round replay with Rushden & Diamonds, and Batty is the latest in a long line of Leeds players to be ruled out through injury.

O'Leary has also lost central defenders Robert Molaens - who undergoes surgery today - and Martin Hiden to season-long knee ligament damage.

O'Leary is also almost cer-

tain not to risk Lucas Radebe for the game at Elland Road, because he has only played 70 minutes in the reserves since his own knee injury, also sustained against Coventry.

Jonathon Woodgate, another central defender, is also very doubtful with a thigh strain which forced him out of Saturday's 1-0 defeat at Blackburn. O'Leary is left with only David Wetherall as a recognised central defender.

On the subject of Batty's injury, O'Leary said: "David has been training with us but his broken rib is still painful, so he will be out for at least another month. I don't know when our injury jinx is going to let up and

leave us alone. But we've an exciting cup tie and we've got to show that we can cope with this crisis that has hit us."

Rushden produced a tremendous display at Nene Park 10 days ago when they held Leeds to a goalless draw. But it was a performance which was nothing less than O'Leary expected and given his team's injury list, tonight's game will not be a foregone conclusion.

"Rushden certainly didn't take me by surprise in the first game. I had seen them on the Monday before the tie and I knew they were a very professional outfit," O'Leary said.

"I always knew it would be tough, particularly knowing how brittle we were at the back going into the game, and we are

going to be struggling defensively again.

"The disappointing thing is that we've been so hurt by injuries in one department. I've not ruled Jonathan Woodgate out yet but he is struggling and will have a test tomorrow. With the number of injuries we've had, I'm proud of the way the players have kept going."

If Woodgate fails his test and O'Leary refuses to gamble on Radebe, then Gunnar Jeannin and Alfie Haaland are likely to figure alongside Wetherall.

Rushden's Jim Rodwell and Gary Butterworth will both play after picking up knee and ankle injuries in Saturday's win at Barrow, although Michael Misson is out for four weeks with a knee problem.

"I had been told indirectly that was no longer the case and

I had gone off to France and got injured. I could have had no club for nine months."

His return to Scottish football now suggests a desire to re-establish his former reputation, but Goram was quick to dispel any idea of an international comeback.

"Once you retire, you retire," he declared.

"You can't pick and choose your games. That is just part of history now and I've probably got more chance of playing in the cricket World Cup."

"Besides, Scotland are sorted out for goalkeepers with Jonathan [Gould] and Neil [Sullivan] and the young lad at Dundee, Robert Douglas. They have got plenty to choose from."

Goram insisted he never despised of finding another club, despite the apparent reluctance of managers to con-

template taking a chance on an often controversial character.

But even he admitted he was surprised by the speed of the deal that finally signalled his return to football after months of waiting by the phone.

"I think the fact that people thought I was going to Copenhagen scared a few clubs off," he said. "But I was always hopeful that somebody would come for me. Right up until three days before I was due to leave I thought I was going. But then the new coach came in and changed his mind, and it was back to square one."

"But I was training with Ayre for a couple of days and then I came up here yesterday morning and within an hour everything was signed and sealed."

Motherwell's manager, Billy Davies, said: "I had no hesitation in bringing him here. He is

a first-class goalkeeper - among the best in Europe - and he will be a tremendous addition to the squad."

"He is a top man as far as goalkeepers are concerned, and I don't think you lose that. His experience and knowledge can only give the other lads here confidence, and it is up to us now to get him training and back in the swing of things."

Goram will fly out with the rest of the squad for their winter break in Tenerife tomorrow and is expected to go straight into the side for their Scottish Cup tie against Hearts on 24 January.

Davies also confirmed he hoped to seal a deal with Everett over the next two weeks to keep striker John Spencer at the club on a permanent basis.

He has had no indication that Walter Smith wants him back at Goodison Park.

Tigana shocks Monaco

THE MONACO coach, Jean Tigana, has resigned because of the 1997 French champions' poor results this season.

"He came to see me yesterday and said he wanted to quit. He didn't wish to go on," the club's chairman, Jean-Louis Campora, said yesterday. "Now we have to focus on the next match at Lens on Saturday, which is far more important."

Tigana's duties have been taken on by the technical manager, Claude Puel, former goalkeeper Jean-Luc Etto and the deputy coach, Jean Petit.

Puel said: "We have had to take emergency measures because nobody expected this. We needed to react swiftly."

Tigana, a former French international, joined Monaco

as coach in July 1995 but has had a frustrating season.

Monaco are seventh in the French first division, 19 points behind the leaders, Marseilles, and out of contention for a place in the Champions League next season. They were beaten in the UEFA Cup by Marseilles in December.

Dynamo Kiev have said they had cancelled the transfer of their Ukrainian international full-back, Oleh Luzhny, to Benfica because the Portuguese side had failed to meet financial conditions. Luzhny had been on trial with Benfica during the Ukrainian close season but Dynamo accused them of a "lack of courtesy", causing "psychological damage" to the player. A Dynamo official had said Sheffield Wednesday might be interested in the defender.

Medican referees, accused of insulting players, may be asked to wear microphones. The Argentinian midfielder Antonio Mohamed, captain of First Division Monterrey, put forward the plan after claiming players were often verbally abused by referees. The idea, proposed during a meeting of team captains and referees, was approved by the officials themselves.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Ray Rhodes, who was dismissed by the Atlanta Falcons immediately following a dismal season in which only three games were won, has been hired as head coach of the Green Bay Packers.

ATHLETICS

Two of America's greatest athletes will swap distances in an attempt to break each other's records at the Bupa Indoor Grand Prix in Birmingham on 14 February. 14. Daniel Komen, the world and commonwealth 5,000-metre champion from Kenya, will make an assault on Halle Gebrässle's 2,000m world indoor record. Ethiopia's Gebrässle will attempt to break Komen's 5,000m record.

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Cornelius Carr, from Middlesbrough, will fight the Jamaican Simon Brown at Thorney Pavilion on 20 February, for the World Boxing Federation's super-middleweight championship.

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SECOND-DAY INTERNATIONAL (Morpion, 1922 days/night match): New Zealand 220 (D. Stretton 100); India 211 (K. Sangakkara 100). India won by 95 runs (series level 1).

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BOW

SPORT

END OF THE ROAD FOR JORDAN P20 • LLOYD'S WINNING FORMULA P24

FA Cup hit by onset of winter

WINTER MADE its presence felt for first time in sport south of the border yesterday, with two out of three FA Cup replays being postponed and racing losing meetings at Newcastle and Leicester.

Scotland lost eight League and Cup games on Saturday, but England had yet to catch a cold. Barnsley's third-round replay against Swindon Town fell victim to a frozen pitch, which will have brought home to the First Division club the value of the under-soil heating they have yet to compete at Oakwell. Pipework was laid in the summer, with the boiler due to be added when the Kop stand is rebuilt later this year.

The Cup tie, which has the reward of a fourth-round home tie against Bournemouth for the winners, has been rescheduled for next Tuesday.

Notts County's replay against Sheffield United was called off after the water-logged Meadow Lane pitch failed a lunchtime inspection. The game will now be played next Wednesday, with the visitors meeting either Yeovil or Cardiff.

The only racing yesterday was at Lingfield's all-weather track and punters have already been denied a flutter at Sedgefield today. Two meetings remain - at Wolverhampton's all-weather course and Kempton, where the prospects are good.



The bad weather may have put paid to any National Hunt racing in Britain yesterday, but the conditions did not prevent horses working out on Middleham Moor in Yorkshire

John Giles/PA

THE WEDNESDAY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- Cruel policy of people kept separate, hide being different (9)
- Pot plant (5)
- Composer not finishing music? (5)
- Does its young damage orchards all over the place? (5,4)
- One's feet always cold on these sheets? (10)
- Maximum temperature in freezer, obviously (4)
- Cheerful progress by main road? (7)
- This among the pliers that pick up? (7)
- Slylock's daughter's case is put off to first of January? (7)
- Appointment in advertising? (7)
- Firm street-price (4)
- Narrow, fashionable and ready-to-wear? (10)
- Individuals Bharat-Asian republic (9)
- Master with a department (5)
- Scoff's cry, indicative of welcome (5)
- Perfect specimen of carp, yet he's slipping away (9)
- Sea Change - work of allegorist (5)
- Vegetable with a well-inverted sugar (9)
- Constable's work that impressed the field (3,3,4)
- For example, getting up in primitive setting (4)

DOWN

- with enthusiasm (7)
- First instalment is put up in warehouse? (7)
- However, dolls too can be treated in this hospital (4)
- A ramble, say, climbed up (5)
- The case for the comprehensives? (9)
- To vex a peer? Taxes, unjustly applied (10)
- Diverting aircraft, up, with means of lifting (9)
- Dishonest practice, putting tricky bends on railway (9)
- One cannot recall having it? (7)
- What makes Capri so dry? (7)
- Grass edges cut (5)
- It's going up on the tenth (5)
- Granny is potassium-negative (4)

Wilkinson's youth call-up 'cheats fans'

HOWARD WILKINSON is on a collision course with club managers who fear he will pick their top young players for two competitions during a crucial part of the season.

Wilkinson, the Football Association's technical director, has even been accused of cheating fans by Peter Ridsdale, the chairman of Leeds United - the club he used to manage.

The World Under-20 Championship is taking place in Nigeria in April, and potentially Wilkinson could have a strong England side at his disposal, with Aston Villa's Gareth Barry, Joe Cole of West Ham and even Michael Owen eligible for selection.

As a full international, Owen is not likely to be included for the three-week tournament, which runs from 3 to 24 April. However, Wilkinson is eager to name the strongest possible squad - and Leeds look set to be particularly hard hit.

The defender Jonathon Woodgate, the striker Alan Smith and the goalkeeper Paul Robinson have all been integral parts of the first-team plans of the Leeds manager, David O'Leary, this season - but the Elland Road club could be deprived of all three. The situation has prompted an angry response from Ridsdale, who believes that, although the

FOOTBALL

BY TOMMY STANIFORTH

tournament is a worthwhile event, young players currently experiencing life in the first team would benefit more by staying in England.

"It is very important that players of 16 and 19 who are not in the first team should get as much experience as possible and they can get that through playing in this tournament," he said. "But I think that players who have emerged into first-team football in the Premier-

ship shouldn't be taken away at a time when your whole season is being determined."

"Championships, FA Cups and European places are being determined and if Howard Wilkinson takes these players when he is cheating the fans, who have paid their season ticket money, and putting the future of individual clubs at risk."

Any player selected for the competition would miss five scheduled Premiership matches, plus the possibility of an FA Cup semi-final and replay. The likes of Wes Brown from Manchester United could also be forced to sit out a European Cup semi-final.

An already unattractive dilemma for Wilkinson became even worse with yesterday's news that the World Under-18 Championship qualifying tournament - postponed in Israel in November because of the political situation in the Middle East - will now take place in

March. From 7 to 14 March, England will compete against the new host nation, Spain, Andorra and Israel - and if they go through they will have to play a two-legged play-off on 31 March and 28 April. Woodgate

would also be a prime candidate for that competition as well.

The Leeds manager has left Wilkinson in no doubt where his priorities should lie. "I am prepared to fight this all the way," O'Leary said. "We are striving to qualify for Europe again, so if we were to lose so many of our players it would be a joke."

"As well as being potentially damaging, those players are regularly involved with the first team and hopefully will be challenging for honours with us in April," the Irishman added.

"What do the FA think these players will learn in Nigeria? There is no comparison in playing in the Premiership."

In contrast to Leeds, Liverpool have had some good news with regard to an international tournament. It was believed that Cameroon would require the defender Rigobert Song on 24 January, when the Anfield side face a fourth-round FA Cup tie at Old Trafford against Manchester United.

However, the 23-year-old Song, who has agreed a £2.8m move from the Italian Serie A club Salernitana and is now waiting for the Department of Employment to issue a work permit, has to serve a two-match international ban and is unable to play for Cameroon in their African Nations' Cup fixture that weekend.

More football, page 25

Murdoch backs Blatter plan

THE MEDIA tycoon Rupert Murdoch has backed a controversial proposal by Sepp Blatter, the president of football's global governing body, Fifa, to hold the World Cup every two years.

However, Murdoch has suggested there could be one major difference - that it is disputed by clubs, not countries. "I think the World Cup is a great international event, and there's no reason why it shouldn't be every second year," Murdoch added.

Uefa yesterday rejected Blatter's World Cup plan, saying it would have "negative consequences". European football's ruling body "not only objected to the idea, but also condemned the way the project was presented, without prior

consultation of any of the relevant bodies."

Uefa is "of the opinion that the project would produce negative consequences in sporting, medical and commercial contexts and have a damaging effect on domestic competitions."

Uefa countered that "there are other ways" of strengthening national teams and federations, and it "noted with regret that the project could be a matter of personal prestige".

Fifa will this week try to synchronize major competitions like the European Championship, the Copa America and the African Nations' Cup.

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Accused of abuse

Sir: Yasmin Alibhai-Brown is mistaken if she thinks false accusations of child abuse are justified in the course of safeguarding the nation's children ("Why do we still ignore the screams of abused children?", 8 January). A false accusation of child abuse cannot protect children any more than a wrong diagnosis protects patients, or a miscarriage of justice protects murder victims.

False allegations are detrimental both to the children involved and the genuinely abused, whose plight may be overlooked because of the readiness to "cry wolf". Justified concern should always be a basis for inquiry, but the utmost care should be taken to avoid jumping to conclusions on the word of an accuser since allegations of child abuse are easy to make and hard to refute.

What it comes down to is the reliance we place on the professionals and institutions entrusted with identifying child abuse. No amount of vigilance will compensate for poor judgement.

MADELINE GREENHALGH

Director

The British False Memory Society

Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire

Sir: Of course I agree with Yasmin Alibhai-Brown that people who ill-treat kids should be reported. But the callers who think very carefully before grassing a neighbour are not hurting their heads in the sand, but recognising the fact that it is a lot easier to put a child into care than to get him out again.

Denouncing a family is likely to cause a lot of misery to a lot of people, including the child concerned. No wonder they hesitate.

Ms Alibhai-Brown is right, it is terrible to be falsely accused of hurting your children. This happened to my wife and me, and the allegations included our teenage son, who was accused of abusing his sisters. It is a terrible thing to happen, but what is even worse is to be cleared by the police and the courts, yet still treated as an abuser by social services and barred from seeing your children. There is no appeal against their decision for my family and myself.

The slogan "best interests of the child" is used to justify whatever the social workers and the foster parents want. The whole system is cloaked in secrecy. There is no legal aid available for representation.

If Ms Alibhai-Brown wants to encourage people to act on the slightest suspicion over the way their neighbours are raising their kids, she should see what can be done to open up the system that takes so many children from their natural families, only to kick them out on the street again when they turn 18. One in four boys in jail are graduates of the care system. Do you call that "safeguarding the nation's children?"

THOMAS McCOURT

Glasgow

Healing the NHS

Sir: The hypocrisy of the opposition party, repeatedly maligning the present government's effort to right the devastation wreaked upon the NHS by that very opposition party, takes the breath away.

I experienced nursing and the NHS during the period of the Conservative Party's reforms.

The whole ethos of nurse training had been centred on the welfare of the patients, their needs, medical, physical and psychological and their rights as individual members of the human race. This is not to say that the NHS was perfect. Finances were never plentiful and care was exercised over expenditure.

As the then government's policies started to take hold the ethos started to change. Patient care became a password, covering glossy leaflets dotted around waiting rooms, GP surgeries and the like, while the old caring NHS now found itself overrun by men and women of commerce, whose



Signs of God No 3: At a service for the deaf at St Mary of the Angels, Canton, Cardiff, Sister Mary leads the 'hymn signing'

Tim Hetherington

brief was to drag it into the market place.

It would be impossible not to be saddened by the erosion of the caring principle. Managers increased and nurses decreased, leaving exhausted, frustrated nursing staff trying to make up the shortfall and fulfil their caring duties with situations quite often on the very brink of safety margins.

What was the hidden agenda? Private health care? It certainly looked that way. The running-down of units, closing hospitals, closing wards, selling off hospitals. Shortage of beds, and facilities, patients being hawked from hospital to hospital in the hope of finding a bed and lifesaving treatment. Is it really surprising that men and women are now reluctant to enter the profession?

The present government will turn this sorry situation around. It will take years to redress the wrongs and put the heart back into nursing.

Mrs J DAVIES RGN (RETIRED)

Maidstone, Kent

Sir: As getting assistance from the National Health Service is now a hit of a national lottery, why shouldn't the NHS get a bit of the National Lottery (or more than a bit)?

GEOFFREY STUTTARD

Chigwell, Essex

Sir: Your article "Undercover monitors to check on GPs" (4 January) is misleading. In November 1998, the General Medical Council decided that specialists and general practitioners must be able to demonstrate – on a regular basis – that they are keeping themselves up to date and remain fit to practise in their chosen field. A steering group has been set up to carry out further work in preparation for further discussion, on the implementation issues, in February.

The options being considered do not include "secret" performance checks. Rather, the

aim is to foster a constructive and helpful culture within which the majority of doctors who are doing a good job can demonstrate this and to enable the early detection of emerging problems so that the doctors concerned have the opportunity to put things right.

FINLAY SCOTT

Chief Executive

General Medical Council

London W1

No crisis in drama

Sir: David Lister's article "RSC goes to war against National" (7 January) creates the impression of hostility where none exists.

The RSC and the National Theatre are two very different organisations with different purposes, but we have always worked together and supported each other. Funding discrepancies between us are a matter of regret to both organisations.

Remarkably, the RSC and the National Theatre have both survived, and created between them dozens of fine productions, through six years of standstill funding. Attempts to portray us as being at each other's throats are merely mischievous at a time when, at last, things may be getting a little better.

ADRIAN NOBLE

Director, Royal Shakespeare Company

TREVOR NUNN

Director, National Theatre

London SE1

Sir: Ian Jack's Spot the Northern Town Competition (9 January) revealed a large chip on the shoulder. There is a reciprocal lack of knowledge about the South by those in the North. Go to Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and ask anyone to mark a map with Basildon or Croydon.

PETER MASKENS

Hornchurch, Essex

discoveries of the millennium, just English Heritage has no plans save it! (report, 12 January). Of course it can be preserved in situ: with an artificial harbour around it, surmounted by a dome. Mary Rose style restoration work could then be undertaken. As such, the priority is financial, and it disgusts me to contrast this with English Heritage's

Mutual confidence

Sir: Andrew Verity's report "Hewitt snubs societies' bid for protection" (7 January) quotes rather selectively from an interview I gave on the Today programme on 6 January. This letter aims to set out more fully what needs to happen before a huddling society can convert to a plc.

What differentiates mutual societies from other organisations is that they are run for the benefit of their members (rather than external shareholders) each of whom has a vote, and that their boards are answerable to those members. So I do not think we ought to be surprised, or worried, if, from time to time, members want to put down resolutions about a society's future. But a pro-conversion resolution tabled by members (if passed) only one possible first stage in a much longer process. None of the societies that have converted, or been taken over in recent years has started down that road on the basis of a members' resolution.

For such a resolution to be carried over half of those voting have to vote in favour. If such a resolution were to be passed – and so far none has been – then it would be for the board to decide what to do next. They are obliged to act in the best interests of their members. Only they can formally propose conversion. If they chose to do nothing, then members

might seek to vote in new directors at the next opportunity, but that would take time – probably some years; and again, they would need to achieve a majority of those voting in order to succeed.

If the board were to propose conversion to the members, then an even stiffer voting hurdle would need to be overcome. First, a turnout of 50 per cent of investing members would be required, and 75 per cent of those voting would have to vote in favour, for conversion to take place. It was this government that raised the turnout threshold from 20 per cent to 50 per cent.

There are also separate voting arrangements for borrowing members. The majority of those voting also have to be in favour before a conversion can go ahead.

So whether or not building societies remain mutual is a very long way from being something that can be decided by 50 members. That is why this government does not see the need for more "protection" for societies.

PATRICIA HEWITT

Economic Secretary to the Treasury

London SW1

edited by Peter Maas in the late Sixties.

Valachi says that the phrase "to go the matresses" originated during an underworld upheaval in the early 1930s known as the Castellamere War. Gangs would rent empty buildings and install assassins in them to target members of opposing factions.

Since this often involved days or weeks of surveillance, matresses were needed for the murder team to sleep on until the "job" was done. The phrase "to go to the matresses" naturally came to

acquire the meaning of starting a gang war – the context in which it is used in *The Godfather*.

Valachi is also responsible for revealing the name that most New York members of the "Mafia" gave to their organisation – Cosa Nostra.

CRAIG DUNFORD

Belfast

Mafia matresses

Sir: Christopher Hawtree (Words, 12 January) is evidently unfamiliar with the *Valachi Papers*, the confession of low-level New York mobster named Joseph Valachi,

who edited by Peter Maas in the late Sixties.

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CRAIG DUNFORD

Belfast

Roman order

Sir: Robert Graves's tree alphabet (letter, 7 January) has an unusual order. Our alphabet, and the order of its letters, is basically the Latin one, which the Romans inherited from the Greeks via the Etruscans.

But the Greeks didn't invent it.

Some Greek genius who knew the Phoenician language adopted their 22-letter alphabet to write Greek. The Phoenicians had no signs for vowels, so the Greeks altered the sound of some letters and invented others, placing the new letter omega at the end. By

early in the 8th century BC Greeks throughout the Mediterranean

were using variants of this alphabet.

Its Phoenician origin is proved by the order of the letters – similar to alphabets used in Sina – and by the names of many of the letters, which mean nothing in Greek, but do in Semitic languages. Alpha means a

bull, beta a house etc.

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bull, beta a house etc.

The Romans dropped a few

Greek letters including omega,

and made a slight alteration to the order.

MARY LANCH

Harrow on the Hill, Middlesex

Sleaze in Brussels

Sir: You report that EU Commission "officials are stunned by the speed" with which concern has mounted over fraud in the EU revealed by Paul van Buitenen ("Sleaze row could ruin Santer's team", 13 January).

This shows their utter complacency. For year after year, the EU accounts have been qualified by the auditors, on budgets amounting to billions of pounds a year. Is it surprising that Green and other members of the European Parliament are trying to take this opportunity to address the issue of EU fraud?

We are taxpayers in one of the countries which is a net payer to the EU, despite our rebate. Should we not be cheering on auditors and MEPs trying to find out how our money has been wasted on fraud?

At the next European Parliament election in June, I hope we will remember which MEPs were supporting such parliamentary action, and which were trying to smother it. Pauline Green and her Labour group show little sign of the concern for sound finance claimed so often by New Labour.

JOHN NORRIS

London TW9

4.00 AM

RADIO 3

9.00-9.30 AM

9.00-9.30 AM

10.30 AM

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12.00 PM

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A fumbled chance to bring negligent police to book

THE REVELATION that only one police officer will be charged with neglect of duty for his actions during the Stephen Lawrence murder inquiry shows how difficult it remains to hold the police to account. This Police Complaints Authority announcement shows that internal investigations are not tough enough to control a force that can mishandle witnesses, lose or destroy evidence and ignore promising leads.

At least the report of the main inquiry into the Lawrence murder, the proceedings of which have shone such light into some dark places, is still pending. It will have to do better than this if it is to be credible. Failings that the Complaints Authority has played down – specifically the failures to give proper first aid at the scene of the crime, and to keep a log book at the scene – ought to have resulted in more than the verbal warnings that will now ensue.

Other officers will escape action entirely. Three have already avoided disciplinary action by the simple but all too common expedient of retiring before they could be punished, which is a pity. The PCA notes that more senior police personnel failed to build bridges with the family; it should have powers to call them to account, too, rather than merely recommend that training he overhauled.

There is more at stake here than simply one miscarriage of justice – although the details of the Lawrence affair alone are shocking enough. Black Britons feel that they are discriminated against by the police, with “stop and search” policies falling disproportionately on them. Stephen Lawrence, a bright, articulate young man who was snuffed out by the racism of a few white thugs, has become an icon to them; he paid with his life for that same discrimination which plagues so many others in the black community.

A wider public are just as anxious to see this case resolved. They have watched with admiration the courage of Stephen’s parents, which has become the strongest weapon in their campaign. That public will feel aggrieved today, and await with concern the report of the main inquiry. In the meantime, they will have to make do with the somewhat grudging public apologies of the Commissioner. That apology will do little to heal the Lawrence family’s pain; only justice will do that.

The inquiry into Stephen’s death was a mess, as the investigations carried out for the PCA by the Keot Commission revealed. The PCA should have the powers and courage to reflect this. It has fumbled an opportunity to demonstrate them; now others must. Dismissal should follow serious censure of officers in the Macpherson inquiry, for anything less would subvert the public’s trust in the law itself.

Forget the gunboats – it’s time for good old-fashioned diplomacy



ANNE
MCELVOY

We must live with the consequences of giving fundamentalism a foothold in strategically vital Yemen

bungled hostage-release demands a lot of looking before the leap.

Some 10 years ago I spent a summer visiting diplomatic friends in Yemen, the most beautiful country I have ever seen. I have never seen so hot as I was at the vast Marib dam, out as exhilarated by the terraced mountain slopes, negotiated by heavily laden donkeys far more speedily than by our four-wheel vehicles.

As things stand, the accused are being held without charge and are being denied access to their lawyer, so Britain is duty-bound to help. I see no justification for the charge that Mr Cook has bungled things by delay, beyond a general desire to kick a politician when he is down. The pressure at such times is always to proceed with a bang and a rush – never to take things steadily.

But some situations defy haste. This one, which combined internal tribal feuds, the undigested aftermath of the unification of Yemen, the ill-feeling generated by Britain’s participation in the Iraq bombing raids and the sensitivity in Sanaa about the

tal simplicities here as it had in other troubled parts of the globe. The north was pro-Western, the south the heart of the Soviet Union’s sphere of influence in the Middle East, where the Russians and East Germans sought – hopelessly – to centralise control in a tribal land by seeking to control the days on which oil could be chewed.

After the Berlin Wall fell, the Sanaa government re-imported fundamentalists from Saudi Arabia in order to chase out the Marxists in the south. Unification was in vogue everywhere. The West supported integration, believing that it would increase stability in the region. But we were cavalier about the terms on which it happened.

Whether Western governments would have approved of Mr Hamza planting explosives on behalf of the mujahedin also is a matter of dates. Osama bin Laden was a useful tool against Western enemies at the time. The end of the Cold War meant a realignment of friends and enemies whose less ethical implications were forgotten in the general relief and triumphalist nicely parodied (except he meant it) in PJ O’Rourke’s boast: “We kicked Comme ass.”

The trouble is, we live now with the consequences of how we kicked Comme ass in Afghanistan – a country bleeding itself to death – and helped give fundamentalism a foothold in the strategically vital country of Yemen. Using the sword of Islam against the hammer and sickle was a high-risk policy and we pay the price today.

I have had my doubts about Mr Cook as Foreign Secretary. Mr Blair’s lavish praise of his “superb” performance was rank hyperbole. But on Yemen, he has the opportunity to rehabilitate himself by showing that he can hold his nerve in a situation which can not be resolved by the more dramatic means of mercenaries or gun boats. This one needs good, old-fashioned diplomacy.

At the mention of the words “British nationals”, however rampant irrationalism sets in. Already those who wish to raise the temperature of an already tragic situation – with three Britons dead – are recommending Libyan embassy tactics. Apart from the practical objection that the prisoners are being held, inconveniently, in Aden and not in St James’ Square, an all-out confrontation with the Yemeni authorities would simply play into the hands of Islamists seeking to strengthen their grip on power.

Yesterday, Michael Howard compared the alleged tardiness of the Government in dealing with the prisoners in Yemen with the stream of prisoner releases in Ulster. As the Conservatives support the Good Friday agreement, this was off-message even by their own standards.

More seriously, his attack on Mr Cook risked fuelling aggression among some of the prisoners’ supporters towards the British government. It was a shameful performance, the worse for coming from an intelligent and experienced former minister who knows that there are times when the national interest demands that the Opposition behaves loyally in order not to make a dangerous situation worse. This is one of them.

A MONTH ago, Yemen was just the mysterious Arabia Felix where they built houses on top of rocks, chewed out through the long hot afternoons and produced the odd unsettling, but distant coup. Now, events at the tip of the Arabian Peninsula have imposed themselves rudely on Robin Cook’s torrid career. Instead of Britain accusing Middle East nationals of being party to terrorism, we find ourselves in the uncomfortable position of our own citizens being accused of plotting kidnappings and bombings in Yemen.

The trail of terror and confusion leads back, via the Internet, to the less exotic setting of Finsbury Park, from where Abu Hamza advertises his Islamic training camp with due regard for equal opportunities. “Special lectures for sisters regarding women and the role of women in the field of Jihad”. His bark may be worse than his bite. We should be suspicious when so much attention is focused on a single loudmouth prepared to deliver soundbites about the need to avenge Anglo-American “state terrorism”. Mr Hamza has been preaching his views in the Finsbury Park mosque for some time. I imagine that they are rather well known to MI5 and the counter-terrorism squad.

Free speech is always the democratic principle we are keenest to throw away when it is others who are to be silenced, not us. It might not be very nice of Mr Hamza to carry in his Internet site passages of Osama bin Laden’s philosophy such as: “The walls of oppression cannot be demolished except in a hail of bullets,” but

JACQUES SANTER complains: “We are the victim of our own transparency”. That is not true. If the European Commission president becomes a victim, then it is because he is not in control of his political business. Brussels now needs to be controlled. The 20 commissioners do not constitute a government, but they have long been more than an administration. What is lacking is a clear distribution of power, a Constitution for Europe. This

will not be attained in the short term. The mess caused by the commissioners does not warrant the resignation of all of them, but the most incompetent commissioners must go.

Die Welt, Germany

EDITH CRESSON [France’s commissioner] is accused of hiring a personal friend as an adviser, and Manuel Marín [Spain’s commissioner] is criticised for a lack of control over community funds that he man-

ages. These do not seem sufficient motives to unleash a crisis of such proportions. The real reasons are different – the negotiation of the community budget has poisoned

things. Germans and Dutch, instigators of the confrontation, are taking advantage of some minor irregularities to justify a drastic cut in European social funds, to which Santer is an ob-

stacle. The Commission will be damaged by a dispute inopportune for the EU and incomprehensible to the public. El Mundo, Spain

THE GOVERNMENT needs a Commission that can support its Agenda 2000 plans with courage and competence. The government must support Santer and his team. But it must also show consideration for the European Parliament and their anger with Brussels, and



Special hospitals in need of urgent surgery

BRITAIN’S SPECIAL hospitals are in trouble – and they have been for years, dragging Britain’s shameful legacy of enlightened lunatic asylums with them across the 20th century and, it now appears, to the brink of the 21st. The publication of Sir Peter Fallon’s report into the Ashworth Special Hospital on Merseyside shows a dreadful example of this lack of progress.

The revelations contained in the report seem too shocking even to merit the word “disgrace”. Many allegations made by a former inmate, which prompted the setting up of the inquiry in 1997 by the then Conservative Health Secretary, Stephen Dorrell, have been confirmed. Management seems to have let the system spin out of control, with drink and drug abuse rife. Pornography seeped into an institutio-

ment to house those convicted of abusing children – incompetence of an unimaginably high order.

These problems have existed for many years. Sir Louis Bloom-Cooper conducted a government inquiry into them as long ago as 1981, reaching the conclusion that such institutions could not be saved. Only radical reform, he concluded, could salvage anything from the wreck. Why has it taken so many years for another report just to record similarly that the staff were unhappy and divided, the facilities were inadequate and the care was dismal?

Ashworth’s problems were bad enough to come to the attention of any decent monitoring system. The staff’s behaviour since the whistle was blown speaks for itself. The last two years have seen the sacking or resignation of two of Ashworth’s chief executives and the resignation of a number of less senior staff.

Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, announced his response to the Fallon report yesterday; procedures in the Personality Disorder Unit are to be tight-

ened and a number of management staff dismissed. Vital measures, doubtless, but they do not go nearly far enough. Mr Dobson argues that abolishing special hospitals altogether would change only “bricks and mortar”; but the buildings reflect the ethos of an outdated system.

The mental health charity Mind has long advocated the only sensible resolution: special hospitals – including Rampton and Broadmoor, Ashworth’s sister institutions – should be closed down and replaced with a network of smaller, modern units. That would allow a range of different treatments to be adopted, rather than just dumping disturbed individuals – many of whom have committed no crime but are being confined on the basis of their theoretical danger – in virtual prisons.

No one is arguing that security around some of the most dangerous people in Britain should be loosened, but medical and psychiatric care require a higher priority. By refusing to countenance a new approach, the Government demonstrates an unwelcome and dangerous conservatism.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“The whole thing was a mess from top to bottom.”
Frank Dobson,
Health Secretary, on Ashworth Mental Hospital

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

“Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison.”
Henry David Thoreau,
American writer



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things. Germans and Dutch, instigators of the confrontation, are taking advantage of some minor irregularities to justify a drastic cut in European social funds, to which Santer is an obstacle. The Commission will be damaged by a dispute inopportune for the EU and incomprehensible to the public. El Mundo, Spain

THE GOVERNMENT needs a Commission that can support its Agenda 2000 plans with courage and competence. The government must support Santer and his team. But it must also show consideration for the European Parliament and their anger with Brussels, and

PANDORA

NOW THAT Lord Falconer has taken control of the Millennium Dome, the project's environmentalist critics find themselves facing a familiar – and formidable – opponent. Once described as a "left-wing Tory" by a Labour MP, Falconer was a high-flying lawyer, said to earn £500,000 a year, who first met Tony Blair when they were schoolboys in Edinburgh and who later shared a Wandsworth house with the future Prime Minister. Greenpeace, who are vociferous critics of the Dome's HFC-cooled air-conditioning system, remember Charles Falconer from his days when he advised the arch-British Nuclear Fuels. Unfortunately, when Pandora rang Lord Melchett, the head of Greenpeace, yesterday to solicit his reaction to Falconer's new Dome responsibilities, the noble environmentalist was out of the office nursing an injured knee. Hopefully, he will mend soon and return to share his views on Falconer.

TWO OF the Internet's greatest claims to fame are about to combine to create yet another unprecedented cyber-event. The Net's infinite supply of pornography and its most famous journalistic scoop (the Web gossip columnist Matt Drudge's breaking of the Monica Lewinsky story) will soon join up when something called Primal Entertainment launches a "live re-enactment of the Starr Report" featuring "performers depicting the intimate encounters between the President and Monica Lewinsky". It won't be free, however, but only available to adults who "purchase tickets with a major credit card". The porn star Ron Jeremy has been engaged both to direct and star as Bill Clinton in this most inappropriate of all broadcasts, set for 25 January. Well, it had to happen, didn't it?

AN ARTICLE appeared in the Daily Mail yesterday by "leading left-wing commentator" Melanie Phillips. This hitting must have raised eyebrows all over the country, for Phillips has not exactly established herself as a bright star in this country's leftist firmament. In 1997, for example, she gave a lecture to the Centre for Policy Studies in which she attacked modern liberalism for its emphasis on personal freedom and individual rights, warning New Labour "to rein back individualism through restoration of true liberal constraints".



"People were chattering, but this kind of shuts you up. It's the kind of thing you're not expecting," said the source. Quite.

Left wing, yes, but according to a late-18th-century definition. As for Melanie's view on the current hospital crisis, yesterday's article proclaims: "the modern nurse often considers it beneath her to make sure that an elderly patient who can barely move is comfortable on her pillows, or that her hair is washed." This haughty indictment of an entire beleaguered profession is radical all right, but leftist?

READERS KEEN to purchase a new brand of scent provocatively called "Vinga" had better go surfing as soon as possible. The dubious perfume is for sale only over the Internet, but the pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, manufacturer of the male rejuvenation miracle drug, is bringing a suit against a firm called Park Plaza Fragrances which, presumably, is a specialist in the techniques of the hard smell.

SOME FIERCE charges against the European Commissioner Edith Cresson are being lodged by an Irish MEP, Nuala Aherne of the Leinster Green Party, in connection with the ongoing Brussels funding controversy. But none so ferocious as her charge, in a press release obtained by Pandora, that Mme Cresson receives "private astrology forecasts" from a long-time friend, René Berthelot, a dentist, who has been appointed to co-ordinate the EU's Aids research efforts. Shades of Nancy Reagan, who used to consult her astrologer before advising her husband Ronnie on his schedule! Pandora looks forward to the promulgation of an effective cross-border horoscope-monitoring authority.

"IT WAS genuinely hilarious," the unnamed source told yesterday's New York Post about a reported sighting of the most personal asset of Ewan McGregor (pictured) at the Versace menswear show in Milan. "The people who got the best view were laughing the hardest."

Apparently those people were sitting directly across the catwalk from McGregor's first-row seat when he unzipped and flashed his light sabre for a brief instant. The *Trainspotting* star is soon to debut as Obi-Wan Kenobi in George Lucas's long-awaited prequel to *Star Wars*.

"People were chattering, but this kind of shuts you up. It's the kind of thing you're not expecting," said the source. Quite.

For sale: one human guinea pig



SUE ARNOLD

Three husbands, five children and a string of disastrous jobs have left my friend Lulu skint

"HAVE A glass of wine," I said to my friend Lulu. It was Sunday afternoon and she had been helping me sort out old clothes for the charity shop all morning. That's what friends are for. Lulu replied that she would love to but she dared not; she was having tests on Tuesday morning and she wanted her body to be absolutely pure. Coming from someone usually referred to as Late-night Lulu, this pious abstention seemed a trifle optimistic – too little too late. Tests for what? I asked, pouring myself a large glass of rioja.

Oh, said Lulu vaguely, she was going to do another of those human guinea-pig things like the one she did last year for Alzheimer's, remember? I did, unfortunately. Lulu didn't. I should mention here that my friend Lulu is always skint. Three feckless husbands, five children and a series of disastrous jobs – including running an all-night laundrette in Oropesa del Mar, a sort of dormitory village for commuter tourists quite a long way east of Tarremolinos (nobody washes anything on holiday) – haven't done much for her financial stability. She's always looking for ways to

make a fast buck. Just before Christmas she tried to sell me a burglar alarm so small but yet so sensitive, she claimed, that I could keep it in the fridge. If she sold 10 of them by Christmas she'd get £200 commission and promotion to area manager.

I said I had enough junk in my fridge already without adding a burglar alarm to the confusion, and to her credit she didn't harass me.

Last summer she told me excitedly that she was going to a clinic near Bournemouth to be a human guinea-pig for a new drug they had just invented to cure Alzheimer's, for which she would be paid £500. Isn't it dangerous, I asked. What will they do to you? Lulu said it wasn't a bit dangerous; her friend Gerald had put her up to it. He had already done it. This did not bode well.

Gerald is an old friend of Lulu's (I think they met at the launderette in Oropesa del Mar) who is also permanently broke. He's 50ish, a retired wing commander invariably dressed in a white cashmere scarf with a flower in his buttonhole. You'd never guess that he lives in a squat near Lewisham.

Lulu said she had passed the preliminary test; now, she said, all she had to do was stay at the clinic, take a few pills, have a few brain scans,

and Bob's your uncle – £500 quid. I telephoned her two weeks later. She sounded fine. "Tell me all about it. What did they do? Do you feel sick?" I wanted to know. "Never felt better in my life," she said, but she honestly didn't remember much about it. Two of the other guinea-

pigs, a married couple, had been sent home half-way through the course and were furious because they had been relying on the money to pay for their new fitted kitchen.

This time round it was much more lucrative. She was getting £3,000 to take a series of pills for a month for something called stress incontinence. I said I'd rather not hear about it, but if they were paying her £3,000, the pills must surely have dangerous side-effects. At the very least she would probably end up with stress incontinence, which would seriously restrict her social life. Lulu said that for £3,000 she was prepared to take the risk, and anyway they didn't seem to have done any harm.

Three thousand pounds does seem a lot of money for taking a few pills. I know that some of my daughter's student friends (male) used to supplement their grants by regular visits to the sperm bank. They were paid £30 a shot. It was all very discreet. In the waiting-room they were not called by their names but by numbers – B52, P45, that sort of thing. And when their numbers were called they were given not just

an empty test tube but a selection of magazines (quality) and magazines (top-shelf) to read while they were about it.

Now, following the recent House of Lords recommendation to decriminalise marijuana for medical purposes, everyone's queuing up to be pot guinea-pigs.

I know a lot of people who would do it for nothing. Apart from selling a pint of blood in Thessaloniki for £10 when I rang out of money back-packing in Greece donkey's years ago, I've never sold my body for science. More fool me.

When mad cow disease was first diagnosed three years ago a splendid old lady of 92 I know up in the Highlands wrote to a well known teaching hospital in London offering herself as a human guinea-pig for BSE research. "I've lived quite long enough," she wrote. "I give you carte blanche to inject my brain with anything you like, and if I do foam at the mouth at least I shall have done something to improve the human race."

They wrote back politely declining her offer. She sounded pretty batty already, they said.

Let's rule out this daft talk of merger with the Liberals



KEN LIVINGSTONE
The trouble with this strategy is that it is founded on a complete ignorance of British history

HOW TYPICAL that Labour should feel that the best way of resolving our current difficulties is a "relaunch". Rational people, faced with a series of disasters on the scale that Labour has suffered in recent weeks, would be more likely to consider it worthwhile to examine why these problems have occurred, before they decide how to respond to them. Labour Party members and MPs have been lectured for years about the need for restraint and self-discipline for fear that public policy rows may damage our standing in the polls, yet almost all the real damage inflicted on Labour has come from the very top of the party.

The party machine launched a major exercise to ensure that the Labour leadership did not lose a single vote at last year's party conference, largely by the expedient of allowing only votes the leadership could win. But we have to ask ourselves what would have been more damaging for the Labour Party: honest debate at the conference on issues such as taxation, the NHS and Iraq, or problems raised by Harriet Harman's choice of school for her children, the Bernie Ecclestone affair, Derek Draper's cash for access scandal, and Notting Hill Gate.

Some of our problems stem from the fact that Tony Blair has allowed the impression to grow that he may be prepared to stand down as Prime Minister during his second term. I have always dismissed this idea as rubbish. Why on earth should a successful prime minister stand down from the most exciting and challenging post in British politics when he is barely 50 years old? I wouldn't be surprised if Tony Blair ends up heating Clem Attlee's record of 20 years as Labour leader, at the age of 61. I may even be able to look down at him delivering a graveside eulogy at my own funeral!

It's about time Tony Blair knocked all this nonsense on the head by letting it be known that he has no plans for early retirement, and ministers should concentrate all their energies on the task of re-electing this government. Tony Blair should also start to loosen up the present obsessive opposition of the party machine to frank and honest debates about issues of policy. In this case the place to start is at the top. Instead of the present 30-minute Cabinet encounter group-style feel-good experience, whereby ministers rubber-stamp what Labour's Big Three have already agreed, we should revert to full discussion across the whole range of policy. Until some ghastly little creature in the Millbank Tendency comes up with constitutional proposals for presidential government, our constitution is still based on the concept of Cabinet government, with the Prime Minister as first among equals.

But far and away the most important issue that Tony Blair needs to resolve is the question of our relationship with the Liberal Democrats and the trade unions. More than anybody else, Peter Mandelson is the figure identified with "The Project", a strategy aimed at severing Labour's links with the trade unions and undertaking a full merger with Paddy Ashdown's Liberal Democrats. The fullest expression of this strategy appeared in Philip Gould's recent book *The Unfinished Revolution*: "the better course would be for Labourism and Liberalism to unite. But this will not be easy. It will require the Labour Party to be generous, to reach out to a smaller party when in a position of great strength."

It would be easy to dismiss Philip Gould's writings. He has never been elected to any public office or even sought election to Labour's NEC, but he remains one of the half a dozen most important figures around Tony Blair. His analysis of polling figures and his conduct of Labour's focus groups have been the basis for Labour's electoral strategy. His memos have rained down on Tony Blair from the very beginning of Tony's campaign to gain the Labour leadership, and even a cursory reading of his book reveals that they have almost always formed the basis of Tony Blair's electoral strategy.

Tony's speech to the 1997 party conference seemed to endorse Gould's strategy: "division among radicals almost 100 years ago resulted in a 20th century dominated by conservatives".

The trouble with Gould's strategy is that it is founded on a complete ignorance of British history. It was not the rise of the Labour Party that led to the downfall of the Liberals, because the Liberals had been in electoral decline for half a century before the Labour Party was established in 1900. The reasons for this are clear. The Liberals were the party of classical laissez-faire capitalism – as they could afford to be in an era when Britain dominated the world economy. The rise of the American and German economies meant that it was essential for British capital to protect itself, turning to the Conservatives who had a strongly protectionist slant, expressed in the concept of imperial preference for British firms within the empire.

The fate of the Liberals was sealed in the 1886 split, when Liberal Unionists crossed the floor of the House in opposition to Irish Home Rule and fused with the Tories, whose vote then rose inexorably to a peak of 55 per cent in the 1931 general election. Like most parties in decline, the Liberals exacerbated the process by personality conflicts and internal leadership struggles.

The creation of the Labour Party was not some unfortunate sectarian error. It was inevitable that a new party would rise to fill the void left by the Liberals and inevitably that party would define itself in terms of its relationship to the Tories. If the



Paddy Ashdown with Tony Blair and Robin Cook at a consultative committee meeting
Ian Waldie/Reuters

Tories were to represent capital, then as night follows day the new party would be based on the trade unions, particularly as this coincided with the enfranchisement of growing numbers of working-class people. Labour's success was that it gradually came to represent both working-class and middle-class interests, and created a welfare state that benefited both.

Even if Labour were now to fuse with the Liberal Democrats it would not produce the result that Gould wants. Millions of Liberal Democrat voters would be likely to switch to the Tories rather than vote Lab-Lib, thus making it more rather than less likely that the Tories could return to power. By contrast, if the Liberal Democrats remain a separate political party, then in Labour's bad years they could find themselves holding the balance of power.

Tony Blair could ease a lot of the suspicion amongst Labour's rank and file by unequivocally ruling out any merger with the Liberal Democrats.

Islam is a religion of tolerance



PODUM
From a lecture given by the fellow of Selwyn College, Oxford, at London's Liberal Jewish Synagogue

AS WE enter the new millennium we need to think of the world that is forming around us, a world that juxtaposes different cultures, religions and traditions. We need to appreciate that in this world unexpected allies and opponents will be lining up. It is essential to keep before us the one point that links us and provides the greatest bridge between the Jewish and Islamic civilisations: belief.

We need to be aware of this link and move towards each other – not for negative reasons such as the need to ally ourselves against hatred of Islam or hatred against Jews, but because of the common source that nourishes us, the idea of the one God and the examples of the great Prophets.

Whatever its critics say, Islam is above all a religion of compassion and tolerance. As a Muslim I am proud of this great legacy and heritage of Islam, and it is this sense of pride that prepares me for the troubled times ahead, as the planet itself, beset by ecological, economic and demographic problems, seems on the point of exhaustion.

In sharp contrast is the anti-Semitism prevalent in Europe. Christians widely believed that Jews were Christ-killers and so had to be punished. Christian crusaders against the Muslims often began their European journeys by slaughtering Jews. European history is drenched in Jewish blood. Hitler's *Glaubenskrieg* – the war against Jews as a people – was the culmination of a millennium of anti-Semitism. It has rightly come to be seen as one of the darkest stains on the human conscience.

Anti-Semitism is far from dead in Europe today. As a Muslim I know that whenever there is evidence of Islamophobia, or hatred against Islam and Muslims, the signs of anti-Semitism are not far behind.

Perhaps it is this generalised anti-Semitism that has prompted Jewish intellectuals to yearn for the ordinary life, to be let alone to get on with their lives. That is what traditional Jews hoped to find in Israel.

But there was the reality of having to deal with another ancient people already living there, the Palestinians. Forced

expulsion from their homes,

and countless other humiliations, are at the core of the pre-

vention of human rights while completely ignoring the extraordinary achievements of Muslim civilisation, such as the architectural wonders of the Taj Mahal and the mosque in Cordoba, and the many and varied contributions to the arts, science and engineering.

The general hatred against Muslims brings consequences. There is a cause and effect. We have seen this in the Balkans only recently. The death and rape camps in the Balkans and the outside world's indifference to them served as a reminder that Islamophobia is very much alive and with us. I want to put on record that in the anguish and anger felt by Muslims over the Balkan horrors, perhaps the most notable sympathisers were the Jews. It was obvious that the suffering in the Balkans echoed their own terrible sufferings half a century before.

Muslims, Jews and Christians must find a way of living peacefully together. If we cannot think in terms of our common noble religions as representing the ideal, then let us think in terms of our common cultural heritage. Let us try to live up to the best they can achieve, and look away from the baseness and violence that is sometimes expressed as part of the response.

Anti-Zionism is a separate matter. Having been founded in modern Europe, Zionism is seen as a foreign import to the Middle East. Its success in creating Israel complicates matters for Muslims. Thus the loss of Palestinian lands are seen with a sense of injustice and anger among Muslims.

It would be foolish to think there can be a quick end to the confrontation that exists between religions and nations today, unless Muslims feel that some genuine sense of tolerance and compassion is shown towards the Palestinian people; unless Muslim rights to one of their holiest cities, Jerusalem, are acknowledged; and unless the sense of hostility expressed in the media is checked.

Muslims, Jews and Christians must find a way of living peacefully together. If we cannot think in terms of our common noble religions as representing the ideal, then let us think in terms of our common cultural heritage. Let us try to live up to the best they can achieve, and look away from the baseness and violence that is sometimes expressed as part of the response.

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REVIEW OF THE WEEK
13 JANUARY 1999

Welcome to a two-tier society

IT IS not often that a single advertising campaign contains the germ of an entire social critique, but Beecham has managed it with its winter push for Lemsip Max. The campaign takes advantage of the recent Sydney flu epidemic with a flagship television advertisement in which a middle-aged male executive bursts in on a secretary and asks whether her boss has everything in place for that important meeting on Thursday. She replies that her chap has the flu and won't be back until Monday. He slaps some Lemsip Max on the desk and declares in steely tones that he will be seeing the hapless absentee bright and early on Thursday morning. The poster campaign puts it more straightforwardly: "Stop snivelling and get back to work!"

It may not seem like much, but it's all there. First, the primacy of the workplace. All must be sacrificed so that you can be at your desk, for there is no more important place to be. Second, the continuing distrust between workers and management. Rising absenteeism must point only to a malingering workforce, not to an overstressed one. Third, the contempt private business has for the public services. No one should feel ashamed that a deadly epidemic that has ravaged a weakened National Health Service has become a petty marketing opportunity rather than a blueprint for far-reaching social change.

But who can blame Beecham for paying no attention to the lessons the NHS has to offer us about working practices in Britain today? Few people are. Certainly the Government isn't. More money may be coming the way of the NHS, but that isn't all that's needed. Far more radical strategies are demanded here and elsewhere, but instead we are offered impotent tamperings with the status quo.

Take the Government announcement yesterday that it is setting up a register of nanny agencies in an attempt to reassure working parents that their children are in safe hands. Ministers were previously considering a register of individual nannies, but the idea was vetoed by Downing Street as being too bureaucratic (New Labour code for "expensive") and a restriction of parental choice (New Labour code for "untenable in the socially divided country that we are pleased to govern").

This legislation wouldn't have helped the Epper family, who lost eight-month-old Matthew, or the Stacey family, who lost five-month-old Joseph, even though it is ostensibly in response to these high-profile tragedies. So whom is it going to help? The nurses who are staying at home to bring up their children not only because they can't afford the kind of childcare that nannying agencies offer, but also because NHS rosters are too inflexible for them to combine work and family? Certainly not.

These new rules will make childcare found through formal channels still more expensive, and top-flight nannies will remain the luxury they were at the turn of the century. And since nurses are already at the bottom of the pay pecking order, there apparently isn't the money in the public coffers to fund them, feminism's airy ideas that the next move forward for women is decent state childcare are not just insulting to them, but irrelevant to everyone.

Who looks after the children while women are out seeking equality in the workplace? Poorer women, that's who. And money isn't just a problem when it comes to finding a nanny. Perhaps an au pair is a cheaper alternative, but only if there is



The prospect of being able to afford a nanny is as remote for most mothers as it was at the turn of the century Keystone

DEBORAH ORR
Can't afford agency rates for nannies? Haven't got a spare room? No car? There's only one career open to you: Mum

room in your ever-more-expensive privately owned house for a live-in help. A shared childminder is a good idea, too, but make sure you keep the car running to ferry them back and forth. Can't afford agency rates for nannies? Haven't got a spare room? Don't have a car? In that case, only one career is open to you. Mum. Better look after your child and someone else's too.

It's an odd kind of feminism that, almost by definition, requires a two-tier system within female society for it to move forward. Where's the equality in a society where some women have to earn a great deal so that they can afford to pay other women to look after their children? How long do we have to persist with this two-jobs-for-the-price-of-one model, ignoring its laughable contradictions and awful social cost?

There is a real alternative, one that the plight of the nurses is screaming at us to consider. It's not surprising that it is within nursing that the difficulties facing working women should be thrown into the starker relief. Nursing, of course, was historically a female profession, and nurses have been expected to carry on working largely under conditions designed for caring young women who have not yet married and, therefore, live at home with no financial commitments. (Even the career-structure changes that have been made are benefiting male nurses most. They have been finding it much easier to climb the modest ladder that is now in place for them.) Another thing that hasn't changed for nurses is that when they complain they're accused of caring not for their vocation but for career advancement, trouble-making, lefty politicking. Just like the good old days, when a woman who didn't want to give up her career for home and children had something wrong with her.

We cannot return to that nightmare. But what we can do is really start concentrating on the idea that equality, just like charity, begins at home. Let's all — men and women — stop being so macho about work and start seriously considering the prospect of working not a five-day, 40-hour week, but four days a week, or three. Let's all start spending more time with our families, while we still have them. It'll mean a smaller salary, but it'll mean smaller childcare bills, too. It'll also mean, among advantages too numerous to mention, less stress, less absenteeism, less tension between women and men, less unemployment, better parenting and more of that leisure we were once promised in the bright and shiny future that has become our dark and dangerous present.

So what is stopping us? At present Britain has longer working hours than

any other country in Europe, and the most recent British Social Attitudes survey found that 25 per cent of the workforce would be happy to work shorter hours for less pay. Research carried out last year by the London School of Economics suggested that even a miserly cut in working hours — to 35 hours a week — would reduce unemployment by a million. Meanwhile stress-related illnesses are out of control, and parents have children whom they

hardly ever see (no wonder depression is on the increase among kids). We are work-obsessed while, at the same time, we complain about the dumbing-down of our culture. Who has time to spare to lavish on culture, except cultural workers?

What's stopping us, naturally, are the bodes who head up industry. The CBI claims that a shorter working week would reduce profits. But is that necessarily correct? The sectors of the economy that are expanding

RIGHT OF REPLY



The chairman of the Football Task Force replies to criticism of its blueprint to encourage football

FOOTBALL CLUBS stand accused by the Office of Fair Trading of acting as a cartel in selling TV rights to Sky and the BBC. The Independent has made up its mind. "Football will win," it pronounced, "if we defeat this cartel."

There are good reasons why sports leagues sell rights collectively — unlike other companies they depend on each other for survival, otherwise they would have nobody to play against and there would be no one to watch.

Leagues negotiate TV deals on a collective basis so that their moeey can be shared between members, helping to ensure healthy competition. Money from these deals can also be reinvested throughout the sport.

Too much money is concentrated at the top of the game, but it is wrong to argue that the way to address this is to break up collective negotiations. Even if individual deals do succeed in bringing more income into football, it will be concentrated in the hands of an even smaller number of clubs than at present.

There may be a way out of all this that would satisfy both sides. The court can allow a restrictive agreement if it can be shown to bring "significant and substantial" benefits to the public. Could not a deal be struck whereby the Premier League would agree to sell rights to televise matches to a wider range of broadcasters? In addition, it could commit to a level of investment in grassroots facilities that the OFT would consider acceptable.

Negotiations for the broadcasting of matches should continue to be done centrally through the Premier League, and the league should continue to reinvest the money. If the OFT digs in its heels and refuses to concede any ground, I can see no other alternative than the break-up of English football.

We're not so easily shocked

WEDNESDAY BOOK

TONGUE FIRST: ADVENTURES IN PHYSICAL CULTURE
BY EMILY JENKINS. VIRAGO. £9.99



slim volume in search of the dirty bits. No luck. The naughtiest thing I could find was a reference to indigestion in relation to underwear. A friend of the author's, like the author herself, dismisses things (to my mind the most sensuous item of clothing ever invented) on the grounds that "I feel like my pants can't get out. Something's blocking them!"

And the physical adventures I was so looking forward to all turn out to be things that you pay for just like aerobic classes. The "wildest adventures" — colonic irrigation, flotation tanks, acupuncture and "Rolfing" (in which your body

is "realigned" by painful massage) — are all

expensive fads, most of which originate in America. The one thing that links them is not physicality, but cost.

For all her Wurtzel-like lungen into the wilder shores of physical experience, Jenkins can't help but descend into unadulterated consumerism. She gives us far too much detail about the shades of lipstick she likes to wear, conveniently telling us their names in case we want to run to the cosmetic counter and order some for ourselves. She spends several pages agonising over what she is going to wear to a New York publishing party — should it be pale yellow, or a little black number?

She excuses such unremitting self-indulgence with odd splashes of cool sociology. "Make-up is a tool by which we shame, flaunt, and mould our inner landscapes along with our exteriors," she says, after recommending Desire lipstick in "its little phallic tube".

The only really sexy things are those you can buy. There's nothing better at stimulating dirty thoughts than the dollar.

The purpose of this book is not to highlight any contradiction. Not that I would like it any better if it were, as "contradiction" must be the most overused word in any budding author's proposal. The shameless purpose of this book is to titillate and shock. But it feebly fails to do so. The location in which the author took off all her clothes in front of strangers was not Fifth Avenue, but on a nudist beach, where it would have been far more daring to have remained fully clothed. To talk about sex, she tours the shelves of her local bookshop, using this as a limp excuse to quote liberally and paraphrase such daring titles as *The Hite Report* and *The Joy of Sex*. Her most erotic outing is to see the Clippendales. No adventurer could be more timid.

Tongue First is classic writing of a sort, but perhaps not the sort the author intends. It has none of the acute analysis or academic authority of her feminist forerunners. Instead, it is a



The adventurous author displays her tattoo

classic of unfocused adolescent ramblings. Only those who have recently voyaged out of puberty link farts and sex — as Jenkins does. And, just like an adolescent, the only subject that really interests the author is herself.

This book may have a sexy title, but it is shockingly amateur. Despite all attempts to appear otherwise (a tattoo, one session of drug-taking, "chosen baldness"), Emily Jenkins emerges from this coy book as a cross-legged young woman with few insights. However her physical exterior is packaged, inside she is just the girl next door

DEA BIRKETT

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WEDNESDAY POEM

FROM 'THE WASTING GAME'
BY PHILIP GROSS

I could hate
those frail maids fading beautifully
in books, wax lilies, pale succulent
stalks that might snap
at a touch. The bird-dropping of blood
in a lace-bordered handkerchief
like the monstrance on the nuptial sheet.
A consummation most devoutly wished
by death. The maiden turns,
which, because I love the girl,
I hate.

Philip Gross's 'The Wasting Game' (Bloodaxe, £6.95) was shortlisted for the 1998 Whitbread Poetry Award

Naomi Mitchison

IF THE word had not acquired such disagreeable connotations of bossiness, I would sum up the author Naomi Mitchison as the Platonic idea of the matriarch. Everyone who knew her wanted in some sense to belong to her clan.

She came of a distinguished Scottish family, the Haldanes, which made her conscious of the meaning of family all her life. That meaning changed for her with the development of her own ideas. She became the matriarch of a splendid tribe of children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She lived to be over 100 and her light brown hair had become pure white, but her blue-grey eyes were penetrating as ever and her charming pink complexion was scribbled over by the interesting lines of old age.

In youth she was remarkable for her short resilient figure which she never bothered to compress into stays though, as she narrated in her memoirs, Richard Crossman's wife Zita did eventually persuade her that a bra was not to be despised. She loved wearing loose hair and loose robes like a woman of ancient Greece, with a fillet and chunks of raw amber to hold them together. Her sandals could be regarded equally as emblems of classical Greece or between-the-wars socialism.

Finally, her special views of the family as an outgoing rather than a nuclear unit led her to an extraordinary relationship with an African tribe. She was invited to become the *Mmorona* (mother) of the Balgatia of Botswana. The adventure had begun accidentally when she was stranded while travelling. A chief offered her hospitality; in time a filial relationship toward her grew up. Even in her nineties she travelled out to visit and advise her African "children" and shared a bedroom with the chief's daughter, where they talked and laughed together far into the night.

Naomi's sense of humour - wry, ironic, witty - was one of her most endearing characteristics. In later years she wrote of authorship and publishing with typical amusement: "Today, if one wants to write about something special [she always did], one has to persuade a publisher that this was something he had already thought of." Another delightful trait was her voice: slow and emphatic with a lift that was definitely not a drawl; more like what I imagine to have been the kind of voice possessed by a Celtic prophetess reading the runes. Yet at the same time she was amazingly light in the hand. Her 1952 novel *Travel Light* was an imaginative metaphor for her own life style.

Married to a wealthy and suc-

cessful barrister, G.R. (Dick) Mitchison MP (later Lord Mitchison), she never allowed herself to be weighed down by possessions. A superbly generous and entertaining host to her friends who visited her at Carradale House in Argyllshire, she was always deeply interested in establishing family-type relationships with the Scottish workers, her neighbours, the lord of the manor or lady-bountiful concepts being utterly repugnant to her.

Despite a trace in her of romanticism (she liked jumping over bonfires at midnight and saluting forth with a gun to shoot a sheep for dinner), her attitude to the local farm workers and fishermen was not in the least sentimental. She showed her practical spirit by standing as Labour candidate for the Scottish universities in 1935 and by sitting on the Argyll County Council as a Labour representative, from 1945 to 1966. She was a member of the Highlands and Islands Development Council, 1966-76.

Meanwhile she had worked devotedly for her socialist husband in

denly loosened and vibrated inside her. The baby was coming alive and moving in her for the first time."

It is generally agreed that her finest novel, and perhaps the best historical novel of the 20th century, is *The Corn King and the Spring Queen* (1931). The exciting and moving story is based on her knowledge of ancient Greece, Egypt and the lands around the Black Sea. Living with her family in Oxford, she had set herself to learn Latin and Greek as a girl, later attending St Anne's College of which she was to become an honorary fellow. The book obviously had the Labour Party in mind, containing as it did a message of both warning and encouragement for all reformist movements. The Spartans failed in their attempt to introduce the "New Times". The implication was that the British would fail too, unless...

The aim of her writings and her politics was to make the world a happier place. A short story dedicated to the socialist economist G.D.H. Cole in *The Fourth Pig* (1936) is very relevant. We are left with the image

of her imaginative writing, particularly for children, sometimes carried her into realms of sheer magic or science fiction. *The Big House* (1950) and *Memoirs of a Spacewoman* (1962) remind us, if only indirectly, that her father, J.S. Haldane, and her brother J.B.S. Haldane were both outstanding scientists, and there are professors of science among her gifted children.

The mixture of scientific with sociological and even magical invention in her case was a potent one. In the early days of her marriage her friends were mainly academics as well as London writers, artists, doctors and psychiatrists, including several of the Bloomsburians. The Mitchisons' family home was Rivercourt in Chiswick, from which they annually invited their friends to watch the Boat Race.

After Dick Mitchison's death he had become a respected Labour minister and peer, though I never knew Naomi to call herself Lady Mitchison, she continued her writing, diversifying into documentaries and more than one volume of her own memoirs. Honours came her way from four Scottish universities, two Oxford colleges and the French Academy.

Having been brought up by an intensely Conservative mother, it had seemed at first that Naomi was destined for a conventional upper-class life. However, there was soon a glint of light. In the next street to the Haldanes' spacious house and garden in Oxford was the famous Dragon School, a prep school to which select girls were admitted. In her first volume of memoirs, *Small Talk* (1973), she remembered inspiring tea parties given by the headmaster "Skipper" Lyman: "Presumably the real thing he did was to treat us as equals, something we didn't get at home." Naomi's literary talents first appeared along with buttered toast, anchovy paste and fudge.

A lifetime later, in her 90th year, she was giving a memorable television interview, when at moments she would suddenly shut her eyes and screw up her face (a gesture familiar to her friends) as if in an agonised effort to conjure up and drag out her memories of the past. Next moment she would be all smiles.

ELIZABETH LONGFORD

Naomi Margaret Haldane, writer, born Edinburgh 1 November 1897; CBE 1985; married 1916 Dick Mitchison (created 1964 Baron Mitchison, died 1970; three sons, two daughters, and one son deceased); died Curradale, Argyll 11 January 1999.

Her finest novel, and perhaps the finest historical novel of the 20th century, The Corn King and the Spring Queen (1931), was about the Labour Party

his constituencies, first King's Norton, Birmingham, and then Kettering, Northamptonshire, where she was admired by the comrades for the brilliance of her intellect and the sincerity of her character. At the same time she was writing the provocative novels of her middle years, one of which, *We Have Been Warned* (1955) was said by some of Dick's Conservative opponents to have made their task easier rather than harder, on the principle of "Oh that mine enemy would write a book!"

She was a prolific writer of poetry, plays, short stories, stories for children, historical and contemporary, as well as novels despite or because of her busy life, and she always said she felt specially creative when pregnant. She had six children, four boys and two girls, the eldest son dying in childhood of meningitis in the days before antibiotics, a sorrow she never forgot. The close mystical link between political rebirth and physical birth is made clear at the end of *We Have Been Warned*: the heroine Diane says these words - "and it was as though a steel spring had sud-

denly of a sandcastle destroyed by the tide. "Yet this was of no consequence to me, for tomorrow I should build another and better castle which would in its turn come to destruction and a levelling out of walls below the salt quick water." *The Blood of the Martyrs* (1939) is set in Nero's Rome, and the unwritten end of the quotation is meant to haunt us: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church" - the church being one particular form of goodness that is ready to oppose evil.

The quest for New Times runs through all Naomi Mitchison's books and some kind of Christian Socialism often seems to be the solution: the Christianity, however, usually appears as half-heard echoes from the New Testament story of discipleship, brotherhood and triumph through sacrifice. Her style is nearer to William Morris than Karl Marx. The advance toward New Times is never dogmatic or dictated; always a slow uneven progress through the thoughts of many epochs, many individuals. "With time and questioning rights become wrongs and wrongs right."



Mitchison in the 1920s: with loose hair and loose robes, like a woman of ancient Greece

Otto Koenigsberger



Tropical architecture

the first State Prize in Architecture - just as his architect father had done before. Soon however, like many another Jewish professional in 1933, he was dismissed from government service by the Nazis.

Koenigsberger then joined Ludwig Böschardt's Swiss Institute for the History of Ancient Egyptian Architecture in Cairo, researching and excavating the Temple of Thotmes III in Thebes. He completed his thesis on the Ancient Egyptian Door for his Doctorate of Engineering, TU Berlin, in 1935, a work which at the time was noticed by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. During a brief period in hospital with TB in Davos, Switzerland, he continued to work on aspects of climatology and numerology in Egyptian architecture before moving on to India from 1939 to 1951.

In India he spent the first nine years at Mysore State serving as Chief Architect and Planner; a post created for him by the Nazim, Mirza Ismail, who had recognised his talents in Europe. Koenigsberger carried out hospital and housing projects as well as the design of Victoria Hall, Bangalore, and the Jayachamaran Institute of Technology.

His first active involvement with development work began about this time. It was enhanced, after Inde-

pendence, by his appointment as the first Director of Housing under Nehru's new government. Koenigsberger had the task of developing housing policies and programmes for the huge numbers of refugees flooding into India at that time. Later he became involved in the creation of several new towns including the new capital of Orissa, Bhubaneswar and Gandhinagar in Gujarat.

Somewhat later he worked with Nehru in the development of the new capital of Punjab, Chandigarh, which this week celebrates its 50th anniversary. Koenigsberger was approached to advise on the new capital city but declined an opportunity to act as its planner although it seems he had much to do with the eventual choice of British architects Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew for the housing and Le Corbusier to prepare the overall plan and design of the civic buildings. It is said that Koenigsberger locked all three of them up in a guesthouse in Simla for a few days to ensure the new city plan was completed on time.

In 1952, Koenigsberger came to England as adviser to Basildon New Town, a post he assumed to catch up on British planning ideals. For a while he did research at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine before turning to his

most important work on low-cost housing development, action planning and what had become known throughout the British Empire as "tropical architecture".

He soon discovered the inadequacies of exporting Western building and planning methods to Third World countries. He detected a real need to develop methodologies and a body of knowledge for local professionals. Some work in this field had already been started by Fry and Drew with their books on tropical architecture, and the setting up of a graduate school for tropical architecture at the Architectural Association, London in 1954. Due to pressure of work in West Africa Fry passed on the leadership to Koenigsberger in 1957.

The school transferred to University College in 1972 and was renamed the Development Planning Unit (DPU), with Koenigsberger as its Head and UCL's first professor of development planning. Between 1954 and 1978 Koenigsberger with DPU took on many short-term assignments and missions in Third World countries for the UN, the Overseas Development Administration and various government bodies.

Koenigsberger's classic textbook, *The Manual of Tropical Housing and*

Building was published in 1974 and prepared jointly with colleagues T.G. Ingoldsby, A. Mayhew, S.V. Szokoly. It still sells 1,000 copies a year in India.

During a busy period "Dr K" - as he was affectionately known - was always ready to offer help and advice to anyone who came with a genuine problem from any part of the world.

Indeed, he claimed that it was a Nigerian student who alerted him to the problems of Third World architects training in Britain. The student had complained: "I have studied architecture in the UK and learned about snow loads and local building regulations... but this is of no use to me in Nigeria!"

Increasingly Koenigsberger and the DPU became more interested in sociology, economics and politics, and architecture began to take a back seat although the technical aspects of housing were always of great interest to him. One of his favourite small projects had been an agency scheme prepared for President Nkrumah's government for "roof loans" to cover the costs of building sustainable roofs for self-build and DIY projects in Ghana.

At the AA in 1988, he took over as a caretaker principal, seeking AA Council's approval to bring in John (Michael) Lloyd from Kumasi, Ghana, as the new head of school. He was also a great asset to the editorial board of the *AA Quarterly* journal (which I had the privilege of editing from 1968 to 1982), which he had helped to create with the AA President Jane Drew. In 1976, he became the editor-in-chief of *Habitat International*, a journal devoted to Third World planning issues.

Otto Koenigsberger received many honours during his lifetime including an emeritus professorship from University College London, and a coveted Dr Ing from the University of Stuttgart. However, it was the award of the first "Habitat Scroll of Honour" in 1989 from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) that brought him the greatest satisfaction.

DENNIS SHARP

Otto Heinrich Gustav Koenigsberger, architect planner: born Berlin 13 October 1908; Research Fellow, London School of Tropical Diseases 1953-57; Head, Graduate School for Tropical Architecture, Architectural Association, London 1957-1972; Professor of Development Planning and Honorary Research Fellow, University College London 1972-78 (Emeritus); married 1957 Renate Born; died London 3 January 1999.

Myles Tierney

and two colleagues - Ian Stewart, who is in critical condition in a London hospital, and David Guttenfelder, both also of AP - were shot at a checkpoint in Freetown.

They were travelling in apparently relatively safe conditions, with a Sierra Leone information ministry convoy aiming to show them what a good job the Nigerian-led Ecomog forces were doing against the rebels. Tierney was sitting in the back seat when a jumpy checkpoint guard emptied his machine gun into the journalists' car killing him instantly and lodging a bullet in Stewart's neck.

Tierney was always in the worst travel spots because, as a colleague

said yesterday, he just "had to go". He was energetic and determined: "AP will have to hire 15 people to replace him," said a cameraman. He was also a true colleague, knowing exactly where professional rivalry ended and solidarity began.

Tierney joined AP as a freelance producer in 1996 after several years of working for the German network, ZDF, in Germany. AP sent him to New York to set up a television bureau but he preferred Africa - which he first experienced during the Burundi crisis in 1996 - and moved to Nairobi in 1997.

We met last June in Ziguinchor, southern Senegal, where we were

both devising plans for getting into Guinea-Bissau, whose border had been sealed to stop a flood of refugees. The roads were blocked and the mangroves mined, so the only way was by water.

Tierney, with the cameraman Khaled Kazziba, hired a local fisherman to take them and their equipment out to sea and back into Guinea-Bissau. Knowing that, as a newspaper journalist, I only had the means to hire a canoe, not a trawler, Tierney included me in his plan. In the event, I did not go with them - judging them to be too conspicuous with their television equipment - and opted for the personal canoe. They

got in (and out again) and I did not. Throughout, Tierney was generous with his knowledge and experience.

Colleagues and friends in Nairobi found it hard to define Myles Tierney. "Some people have said he had it coming because he was so driven," said Jane Standley, BBC Africa correspondent. "That is grossly unfair because we all benefited from the information he managed to get."

"He saved my life at least three times that I know of and there were probably many other times when he just did not think it important to tell me what he had done for my sake," said Alistair Lyne, a South African cameraman who worked

with Tierney throughout central Africa in 1996 and 1997.

Claude Collart, a senior producer at APTN in London, said: "He spoke fluent French and German. We brought him over to Germany to prepare the election coverage there last year. It was a comfortable job and Guinea-Bissau happened in the middle of it. He said, 'Sorry, I have to go.' That is how I remember him, always needing to tell the story."

ALEX DUVAL SMITH

Myles Tierney, journalist: born New York 25 November 1964; died Freetown, Sierra Leone 10 January 1999.



Killed in Sierra Leone

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

CHILD: On 9 January 1999, posthumously, at Treloar Hospital, Truro, child of Carolyn and Bodmin. **Father:** of Christopher, M.A.G. Child, R.A., Retired farmer and amateur painter, who died in 1988. **Mother:** of Bodmin Funeral Services, Chapel of Rest, Bodmin, Cornwall. **AGE:** 79.

MORSE: Nancy, on 6 January 1999, aged 85 years peacefully, not in pain. Wife of the late Dr. John Morse. Mother of Jonathan, Annabel and Oliver. Grandmother of Roses and Emma. **Funeral:** at Didsbury Cemetery, near Wilmslow, Cheshire, on Saturday 13 January at 12 noon. No flowers please.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR GAZETTE BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services. Wedding anniversaries. In memoriam) are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, functions, forthcoming marriages, Marriages) are charged at £10 a line. VAT extra.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Princess Royal presents the Institution of Incorporated Engineers Young

R. Gerallt Jones

ONE OF the most prolific Welsh authors of the post-war period, R. Gerallt Jones excelled both as poet and prose-writer, and more unusually, in both Welsh, his first language, and English, the language of his early schooling. He also took a passionate interest in the affairs of the Third World, especially those of the Indian subcontinent, and of Jamaica, where he spent two years as the first Principal of Mandeville Teachers' College.

He was born, a poor Anglican vicar's son, at Nefyn on the Lleyn in north-west Wales, the rugged peninsula that points towards Ireland. At the age of 10, still a monoglot Welsh-speaker, he was sent by his Anglophilic High Church, High Tory father as a boarder to a school near Shrewsbury and thence to Denstone College, a minor public school for boys, in Staffordshire.

Although his schooldays were happy – his exceptional intelligence and prowess at cricket ensured that he was not ragged on account of his very un-English background – the experience made him think of Wales, and the wild scenery of Lleyn in particular, as an ideal country. "Wales for me," he wrote, "was a bairn, a home, a wonderful world, hidden, separate from the world of school, a proud possession of my own, a secret room that my English friends knew nothing about."

It was to the sea-girt peninsula that he was to return so often in his writing, sometimes to the rather daunting figure of his father who, of illegitimate birth and Methodist upbringing, had decided that his only child would not be tainted by what he considered to be the hypocrisy of the Welsh Nonconformist chapel.

At the University College of North Wales, Bangor, where he first encountered the harsher realities of Welsh life, R. Gerallt Jones took a degree in English and went on to write an MA thesis on the work of Robert Graves. Also at Bangor, in association with Bedwyr Lewis Jones, a lifelong friend and co-religionist who later became Professor of Welsh at the College, he launched and edited the magazine *Yr Arloeswr* ("The Pioneer"). Brief though its lifespan was – it ran for only eight numbers between 1957 and 1960 – the magazine published the work of Gwyn Thomas and Bobi Jones, who were to join him in a triumvirate of poets now acknowledged as the most important of their generation.

This interest in literary journalism remained with him for the rest of his life: he was a regular contributor to Welsh periodicals and from 1987 to 1992, again with Bedwyr Lewis Jones, was edited the Welsh Academy's influential magazine *Taliessin*.

The versatility of R. Gerallt Jones as a writer was quite remarkable. He published five volumes of verse in Welsh: *Cymysg y Drudn* ("Among the Nettles"), 1959; *Cwylwm* ("Knot"), 1962; *Cysgodion* ("Shadows"), 1972; *Dyfyl Gerddiwr y Maes* ("The Relentless Walkers of the

Field"), 1981; and *Cerddi 1955-89* ("Poems 1955-89"), 1989; and one in English, *Jamaican Landscape* (1969), the fruit of his two years in the Caribbean. A deeply meditative poet, he was able to give the luminous concrete form by the use of striking imagery and the rich idiom of his native district. His command of English, together with his belief that Welsh poetry deserved and needed a wider audience, led him to translate a good deal of it, notably in the substantial anthology *Poetry of Wales 1930-70* (1974).

In his prose writing, he tackled contemporary social problems with a special sympathy for the marginalised and dispossessed. His first novel, *Y Fod Fawr* ("The Great Hill"), 1960, is about a Welshman who campaigns for the rights of black people in South Africa; its sequel, *Nodol Gwyn* ("A White Christmas"), 1962, set in Bangor, is more concerned with politics and social justice at home. In *Triptych* (1977), one of two novels with which he won the Prose Medal at the National Eisteddfod, he dealt with the spiritual disintegration of 20th-century culture as a background to the slow death from cancer of a physical education teacher; while the other, *Cafflogion* (1979), described a commune in Lleyn after an unnamed catastrophe in a dark, dystopian future. His novel *Gwynnydd y Corwynt* ("Fanning the Whirlwind"), 1978, is about terrorism in Ireland.

But perhaps his most celebrated book is *Cwnn y Gwirion* ("The Loss of Innocence"), 1966, a collection of seven short stories exploring the innocence of childhood and the burgeoning of conscience in a boy growing up in Lleyn during the Second World War. In 1982 the stories were adapted for television by their author as *Joni Jones*, one of the most enchanting films made since the advent of SAC, the Welsh-language television channel, and filmed by the American Stephen Bayly. One episode, "The Evacuees", was the first Welsh-language production to be screened at the London Film Festival.

In his literary criticism, R. Gerallt Jones displayed a fundamentally liberal outlook, examining Wales and its culture in a wider context which took in the problems of the Third World, about which he made several television programmes. He published three collections of essays on literary subjects: *Yn Frawd i'r Eos Druan l'Brother to the Poor Nightingale*, 1961; *Ansaidd y Seiniou* ("The Quality of the Foundations"), 1972; and *Seicoleg Cardoza* ("The Psychology of Begging"), 1989. Particularly concerned about the effects of television on literature, and how to use the medium creatively, he grappled with some of the threats to a literate society in much the same way as cultural analysts like Richard Hoggart have done in England.

He also wrote monographs in Welsh on TS Eliot and T.H. Parry-Williams; his full biography of the latter is due to be published by the University of Wales Press later this year. Among his miscellaneous prose are *Jamaican Interlude* (1977), an account of his time at Mandeville College, and several books in both Welsh and English about Ynys Enlli, the island of the furthest tip of Lleyn known in English as Bardsey, to which he was a frequent visitor. As a literary critic, he was always ready to put his gifts at the service of his English-speaking countrymen, publishing numerous reviews and articles in such magazines as *Poetry Wales* and *Planet*, in which he wrote engagingly about what was being produced in the Welsh language.

The professional career of R. Gerallt Jones reflected his restless energy and preference to be always "fully stretched". He began as a teacher of English at the Sir Thomas Jones School at Amlwch in Anglesey in 1957 but, four years later, was appointed lecturer in the Education Department at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. After his sojourn in Jamaica, he returned to Wales in 1967 to take up the wardenship of Llandover College, a public school in Carmarthenshire and one of the few



'Wales for me was a hearth, a home, a wonderful world. hidden, a proud possession of my own, a secret room that my English friends knew nothing about'

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in the whole of Wales, and there he remained until 1979.

After a year spent as a freelance writer, he was appointed Senior Tutor in the Department of Extra-Mural Studies at Aberystwyth. From 1989 until his retirement in 1995 he was Warden of Gregynog Hall, the University of Wales residential study-centre near Newtown in Powys. It was in the last-named post, amid the old mansion's mock-Tudor architecture and splendid park, with access to a fine library and an ever-changing company of visiting students and academic staff, that his genial personality, wide interests and independent views were active on behalf of no political party. He was given fullest play. His dark, Venetian features, broad grin and generous disposition made him a popular Warden, although he sometimes gave the impression that the minutiae of administration held little appeal for him.

Although he once described himself as a reluctant committee man, the list of public bodies of which R. Gerallt Jones was a member is a long one. Principal among them was the Church in Wales, in which he had been brought up and to which he remained loyal throughout his adult life, despite his profound understanding of Nonconformist Wales and the pressures which had led to Disestablishment in 1920. He served as a lay reader in the Church in Wales, editor of its quarterly journal *Impact*, and a member of its Governing Body. But there was nothing narrow or exclusive about his allegiance to the Anglican Communion. In fact, he was interested in all religions, and I well recall how, during a trip to the Caucasus in the 1970s, he could not be kept from the icons and rites of the Georgian Orthodox Church.

Among other bodies on which he served were the Broadcasting Council for Wales, the Welsh Arts Council (of which he was chairman), the Welsh National Film and Video Archive, and the Board of Governors of SAC. To all these appointments he brought balanced judgement, a dryly witty manner, and a broad spectrum of interests which, though deeply rooted in Wales and the Welsh language, looked out at England, Europe, and the wider world with a mixture of fascination, amusement, sympathy, and sometimes consternation.

MEIC STEPHENS

Robert Gerallt Hnmet Jones, writer and educationist; born 1 November 1934; Principal, Mandeville College, Jamaica 1965-67; Warden, Llandover College 1967-79; Senior Lecturer, Department of Extra-Mural Studies, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth 1979-89; Warden, Gregynog Hall 1989-95; married 1962 Susan Lloyd Griffith (two sons, one daughter); died Dol-y-bont, Ceredigion 9 January 1999.

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

CHILD: On 9 January 1999, peacefully, at Tredegar Hospital, Treforest, Mrs Child (née Burhill), aged 85 years, of Cardigan, Bodmin. Widow of Commander M.A.G. Child RN. Arrangements for her funeral to be held at Glynn Valley Cemetery, Bodmin, Cornwall on Friday 15 January 1999 at 10.15am. floral tributes if desired to Bodmin Funeral Services, Chapel of Rest, Bodmin, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL12 8SD.

MORSE: Nancy, on 9 January 1999, aged 85 years, peacefully, not in pain. Wife of the late David Morris Morris. Grandmother of Rosies and Emma. Funeral arrangements if desired to Bodmin Funeral Services, Chapel of Rest, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL12 8SD.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In memoriam) are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, functions, forthcoming marriages, Marriages) are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra.

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Craigie Aitchison, painter, 73; **Sir Brian Barratt-Boyes**, heart surgeon, 75; **Mr Clive Betts MP**, an Assistant Whip, 49; **Sir Johannes Bjelke-Petersen**, former prime minister of Queensland, 88; **Mr Richard Blackford**, composer, 45; **Mr Michael Bond**, creator of "Paddington Bear", 73; **Dr Sydney Brenner**, biologist, 72; **Sir John Caines**, former senior civil servant, 66; **Mr Edward Crew**, First Constable, West Midlands, 53; **Sir Tim Flavin**, actor, dancer and singer, 40; **Mr Stephen Hendry**, snooker player, 30; **The Right Rev Michael Henley**, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane, 60; **Lord Johnston**, a Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, 57; **Sir Liam McAlpine**, a Lord Justice of Appeal, Northern Ireland, 66; **Mr René Rafferty**, golfer, 35; **Sir Colin Shepherd**, former MP, 61; **Mr Bernard Strimmins**, journalist, 68; **Mr Robert Stack**, actor, 80; **Mr Kenneth Turpin**, former Vice-Chancellor, Oxford University, 84; **The Right Rev Michael Vickers**, Assistant Bishop, Blackburn, 70.

ANNIVERSARIES
Births: Jan Josephsohn van Goyen, landscape painter, 1978.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Princess Royal presents the Institution of Incorporated Engineers Young

Woman Engineer of the Year Award 1998 at the Royal Society of Arts, London WC2; as President, Royal Yachting Association, attends the Royal Yachting Association Luncheon at the Royal International Boat Show, Earls Court Exhibition Centre, London SW5; and, as President, British Knitting and Clothing Export Council, attends the British Apparel Export Awards at the Royal Lancaster Hotel, London W2.

INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW, EARLS COURT EXHIBITION CENTRE, LONDON SW5

CHANGING OF THE GUARD
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; F Company Scots Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Coldstream Guards.

APPOINTMENTS

Mr A. de P. Bueno QC, Mr D.J. Farrer QC, Mr D.R.L. Boddy QC and Miss L.S. Godfrey QC, to be Masters of the Bench of Middle Temple.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; F Company Scots Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Coldstream Guards.

WEDNESDAY LAW REPORT

13 JANUARY 1999

Commercial Union Assurance Co plc v Shaw (HMIT)

Court of Appeal (Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Brooke)
21 December 1998

Graham Aaronson QC and Malcolm Gamble (Linklaters & Paines) for Commercial Union; Ian Glick QC and Jonathan Peacock (Solicitor of Inland Revenue) for the Crown.

Lord Justice Peter Gibson said that Commercial Union submitted that DTR came within the words "other relief from tax" in section 338(1) of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988, so that the total profits had to be treated as reduced by DTR. However, section 338(1) did not assist Commercial Union because DTR was not a relief from tax which reduced profits, but was a credit to be allowed against UK tax.

The scheme of the corporation tax legislation required first the ascertainment of income from a particular source and chargeable gains as reduced by any relief applicable to that source or to those gains, then the ascertainment of the total profits by aggregating the income from

the various sources and the gains, as reduced by any relief applicable to those total profits.

Once the amount of the net total profits had been ascertained, the corporation tax *prima facie* chargeable on the total profits could be determined. That corporation tax might in turn be reduced or extinguished by other reliefs which were expressed to apply to that tax only than was the amount of corporation tax payable ascertained.

Commercial Union further relied on the fact that it was entitled to use its power of allocation under section 797(3) to allocate charges on income in such amounts and to such of its profits as it chose. However, the right to allocate under section 797(3)(a) of the Act existed only for the purposes of the section, which was to set for a single tax against UK tax on the same profits, and Commercial Union had aimed beyond that limited purpose.

Moreover, the exercise of the right to allocate could not affect the calculation of whether in a given accounting period the charges on income paid by Commercial Union exceeded the amount of the profits against which they were deductible. Section 393(9) did not permit the carry forward of charges on income which were less than the amount of Commercial Union's profits against which they were deductible. Consistently with that, section 797(3) did not permit a company to allocate to profits a deduction greater than the amount necessary to reduce those profits to nothing.

KATE O'HANLON, Barrister

aunt. She is in the habit of silencing callers with stern advice and then asking, "Hello? Hello?" to make them feel even more idiotic. It was not long before kindergarten playgrounds echoed to the tapping of dumberheads' brows and the query "Hello?" when something had not sunk in. Such tactics have spread to banking circles.

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE
hello, interj.

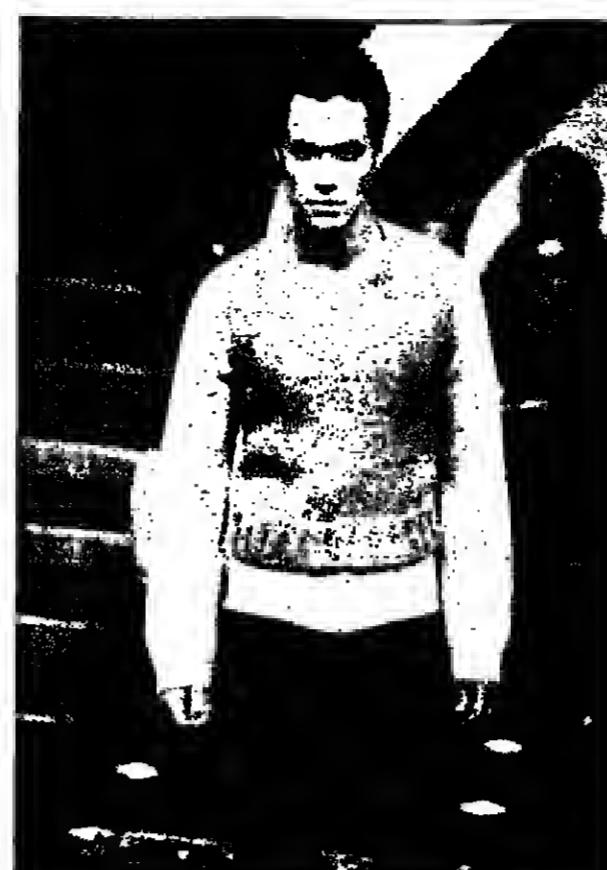
things about Bob Livingstone, but recumbent in 20-year-old photographs is Dr Laura Schlessinger, now a highly moralistic wireless agony



Emporio Armani



Prada



Dolce & Gabbana



Vivienne Westwood

There are no trends in menswear. As the Milan shows proved, it's only the details that change. By Melanie Rickey

Suits you, signore

Milan harbours the most popular menswear labels in the world. Ask any man to name their ultimate label and chances are Prada, Miu Miu, Gucci, Dolce & Gabbana, Armani, Versace and Calvin Klein will be on the list. If not, perhaps Jil Sander, Jean Paul Gaultier, Vivienne Westwood, Issey Miyake or John Richmond make the grade. All show in Milan where, in the last five days, the most important event in the men's fashion calendar, the autumn/winter 1999/2000 collections - officially dubbed Millennium Men - has been taking place.

Let's get one thing clear: Men's fashion is not about big trends. There are no rising or falling hemlines here, no hair or make-up looks, no question of flat or high shoes, just the most part-fabulous clothes. What trends there are don't happen overnight, rather they evolve gradually season-to-season. As everyone who's anyone told me throughout the week: it's all in the details, the fabrics, the feel. A suit is a suit, after all. David Bradshaw of Arena - he's also fashion consultant to Prada - explained: "These shows help men make the decision of which black suit to buy. All the fashion forward detailing is in the sportswear, and this helps to sell the suits because, for obvious reasons, the suit can't change much." Except, of course, in the details.

One of the most prominent fashion "details" of the last few seasons has been the Velcro fastening. It continues to pop up on everything from tailored suits, shirts and coats to trainers, as well as on sportswear; where it belongs. For autumn/winter, however, the practical, no-fluff-collecting zip looks set to make a welcome return. Jil Sander's padded body-warmer zipped up to a funnel neck (funnel necks on everything is another important detail), as did her shirts. At Issey Miyake the arctic outerwear - big, grey-green parkas, huge white Puffas, and combat-style industrial zips. At the hot new American label Richard Edwards, a padded army green body-warmer had zip-on-zip-off arms, while an army green coat had zip-out lining. At Costume National, zips were used to conceal bodys with in the collars of tailored suits.

A shift in colour palette was also in evidence, from mainly black and grey for the coming summer to mainly black and grey (yep, it's still there), with dashes of bright colour thrown in for good measure. Tomato red was given a good airing at Gucci and Costume National in shiny hide jackets, at Jil Sander in knitwear; and at Prada. Orange was the strong colour of choice at John

Richmond. Dirty army green and shades of beige and cream and navy were also popular across the board. Versus went for baby pink and brown together; and Vivienne Westwood and Jean Paul Gaultier went all out for colour.

This season has proved to be special because of the millennium issue and each designer addressed the "what wear for the party to end all parties" in their own way. Almost every show included a tuxedo, or modern tuxedo derivative. Gucci's tuxedos pants were glamorous in white or black with red piping along the outside leg, and worn with shiny pony-skin biker-inspired jackets. Issey Miyake's was traditional. Giorgio Armani's was James Bond slick. Cerruti's was for a modern-day Sacha Distel, buttoned low for a laid-back look. Gaultier's appeared to be hand-knitted. Dirk Bikkembergs' was in leather. Dolce & Gabbana's was slim and mafia sexy and Versace's was aggressive, raunchy and very rock'n' roll.

The common denominator in all of these suits was their shape: unanimously single-breasted jackets with flat-front pants, many of which were straight and loose through the leg. And that takes care of the black suits, which has incidentally made the store buyers very happy. Damian Shaw, the contemporary menswear buyer from Liberty, had a few important check-points for his buying strategy - the first, if it's black it sells; the second, leg shape. Too baggy is bad. So is too straight. And they must look good on the bum. Gucci, Bikkembergs, Prada and Costume National scored there.

Vivienne Westwood and Jean Paul Gaultier provided the fun millennial party gear. Westwood showed silver and gold sequin pants tucked into knee-high boots and ring-master jackets with military detailing, yet amongst the high camp there was softly coloured spearmint and chocolate knitwear, moleskin pants and tweed suits. She scored with her tartan kilt-shirt-tie-and-knee-high sock ensembles, which managed to look mainly even in raspberry and lilac. Gaultier, too, included his signature kilts, but his showpiece, a sequin embroidered biker jacket with 1999/2000 worked into the arms, was a definite camp winner.

There were plenty of fashion trends that have been creeping up on sartorially motivated men for some time now. Chunky, shrunken-to-the-body multi-ply hand knits - many in soft cashmere - looked fantastic in the McQueen line, at Costume National, and especially at Dolce & Gabbana. Biker motifs were also strong. Embroidery, shine and sequins were in evidence across the board, done best at Dolce & Gabbana on army T-shirts, on tanks at Gaultier, and on the worn-

in jeans at Gucci which were held up with a rope belt and worn with velvet tuxedo jackets.

Macho furs made a somewhat disturbing impact on the proceedings. Versace went for wolf as coat linings, on collars and trouser edging. Gucci and Gaultier did fur biker jackets. Dolce & Gabbana did full-length mini pants, while Prada showed a fur sport's jacket with a face-protecting hood. Trussardi, the worst offender, used beaver, wolf, crocodile and snake.

If only it were fake. These items may never make it into British shops, a fact the Italians are aware of, but not bothered by. Indeed the English attitude to fur is laughed at by foreigners, who think we're prissy. Perhaps someone should send them on an educational trip to a fur farm.

If, come autumn, the average male is rushing out to buy his black suit, more fashion-conscious men might be distracted by sportswear. In fact, this has been the biggest single revolution in men's fashion this decade. As Nick Sullivan, the associate editor of *Arena*, pointed out after the perfectly executed hit-of-the-season Prada show, "Five years ago everyone here [male editors and buyers] would have been wearing suits; now look at them." Indeed, a look at the fashion pack is a good indicator of things as they stand.

There's a black suit worn with Prada red-line sneakers and a big parka with a fur hood over there; a funnel-neck, snow-white jumper; tailored trousers and sneakers over here; a body-warmer with combat pants and boots to my right. Sullivan is sure the sportswear thing is at its height now. "When even the most conservative of designers are doing elements of luxury sportswear it is a sure sign a change will be in the air. But the Italians are best at it. After seeing the Prada show you think, yes, it's got mileage," says.

Louisa de Paula, the contemporary menswear buyer for Selfridges, was in agreement. "Menswear now is about uniform dressing. I call it 'Subconscious Millennial Dressing,'" she says. "Men have totally changed the way they dress in the last 10 years. Now there are no rules. Function and utility looks have become the norm."

Indeed the Prada show summed up the mood of the collections perfectly. So here are a few tips. Boots are ankle or mid-calf in tough, toffee-coloured leather. Tailoring is slim and hard, in grey, desert khaki, army green and black. Car coats and duffels are hooded, with padded elbows. Long padded coats are belted in, and pants are cropped. The Prada Sport line included water-proofs, sneakers, bags and hats - all of which had "must-have" stamped all over them. But you'll have to wait until September to buy them - sorry.



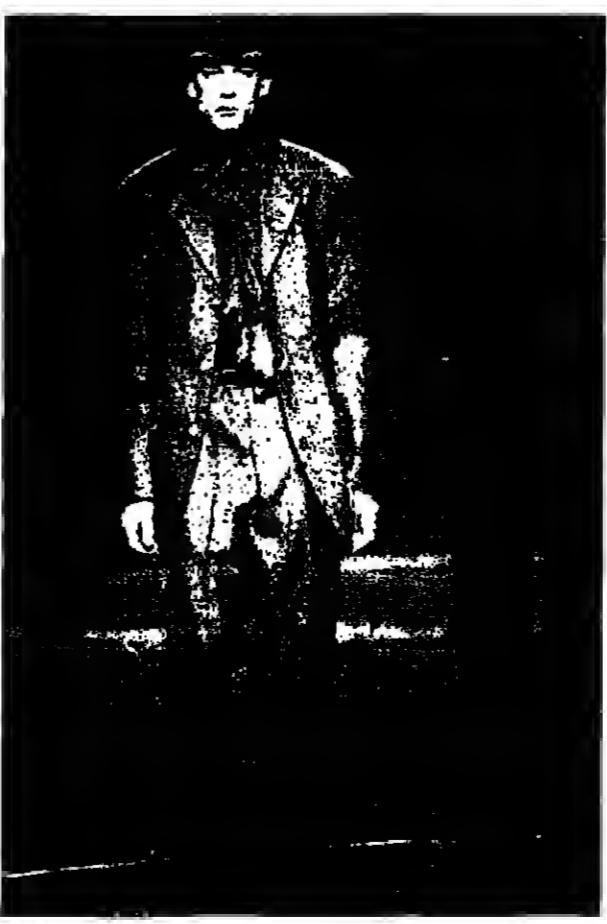
Versace



Richard Edwards



Gucci



Issey Miyake



Jean Paul Gaultier

Photographs: Chris Moore

What's in a voice? According to Jonathan Réé's new book, as much as your very soul. By Rachel Halliburton

And the ears have it

Admittedly, it wasn't as mad as the harpsichord that made cats mew different notes by sticking needles up their bottoms. Even so, few thought that the Parisian Jesuit, Louis Bertrand Castel, would succeed in his mission to build a keyboard which played music entirely in colour. Taking as his cue Isaac Newton's theory that the seven main colours of the spectrum could be ranged across the notes of an octave, the mad inventor built a series of instruments whose elaborate, multicoloured mechanisms – variously using glass prisms, candles, dyed cloths and lanterns – all proved to be woefully effective at emptying concert-halls. In the end, he realised his ambitions were more likely to be prey to Newton's theory of gravity than to his dreams of colour music and, after his final project came tumbling round his ears in 1757, he turned up his toes and died.

The point to this story, as Jonathan Réé will tell you, is that people should resist the temptation to draw too many analogies between the visible world and the world of hearing. Although, as he writes, "science tells us... that seeing is simply what happens when light enters our eyes, and hearing when sound enters our ears", the excited attempts of Newton, Castel and others to draw parallels between the two always result in confusion.

In his book, *I See a Voice* – published next Monday – he reveals that Castel's dilemma, far from being a piece of historical trivia, forms the basis for understanding one of the most controversial linguistic debates to rage over the past three centuries. The question of how to create an effective system of communication between the deaf and the hearing population – and therefore to translate the essentially oral methods of teaching language into visual representations – was a source of frequent debate from the 18th century onwards. Not only did it reveal the prejudices surrounding the voice, but it also provoked a series of challenging and ultimately revealing questions about the nature of language itself.

The fact that "dumb" can still mean stupid is only the tip of an iceberg of centuries' prejudice. At its murky depths lies the practice of killing children born deaf – in ancient Greece and Rome it was legal to dispose of deaf offspring when they were as old as three – while in Jewish law deaf people were not allowed to own property.

Having tempted the reader in with these historical facts, Réé takes a quick side-step to literature, pointing out that while those struck blind – such as Oedipus or Samson – are normally dignified, the deaf and dumb are often reduced to victims, like Hans Christian Andersen's Little mermaid, or even worse, objects of ridicule. Finally he pulls the reader into the book's heart, the realm of "hardcore" philosophy, where he



Words and pictures: John Bulwer's 1640s sign language, a 'virgin Philosophie of gesture'

shows – for example – that when certain 18th-century philosophers said the deaf were doomed to remain like animals, leading minds such as Immanuel Kant agreed, saying that since speech was the source of civilisation, the dumb could never attain the faculty of reason.

I See a Voice actively draws the reader to indulge in metaphysical musings about what it would be like to be deprived of a sense, and starts by analysing the relative prejudices

over the centuries to the importance of eye and the ear. As I entered Réé's flat in this frame of mind, it struck me how much you could still pick out with your ears to navigate. The Indian music drifting up from the floor below indicates the convenient proximity of a curry-house, while the clunk of shoes on the bare floorboards and the softy licking flicker of the flames from the coal fire in the grate give some clues about the cosy, yet minimalist mode

of decoration. And Réé's voice, which hovers around the tenor range, is constantly on the brink of laughter, though its speech patterns are measured and analytical – full of pauses for thought.

The voice and its role are the crux of the hook. Historically, there have been many claims about the voice's powers: some have put forward the notion that it is a reflection of the soul, others that it represents our power to participate in politics (the German

To counter that perception, Réé

Jonathan Réé: the Charles Dickens of philosophy? Tom Craig

"Stimme", which means voice, also means "vote", points out Réé.

"One of the things that started me on the subject was noticing that people find it very difficult to say when a 'voice' is being used metaphorically and when it's being used literally," he explains. "For example, you can talk about the voice of conscience, or you can talk about madness in terms of hearing voices – so it seemed like a rather clever topic to fix on... though it does lead absolutely everywhere."

The resulting eclectic philosophical history is full of gems of historical tales and provocative questions about the interpretations of the senses. One of the most entertaining theories about the voice is put forward by the Renaissance physician Francis Mercurius Van Helmont, who announced that the voice was a manifestation of sexual power – and its energy was derived from semen held back from physical emission.

"One of the things that I told myself quite early was that I wanted to write philosophy like Charles Dickens – I wanted to have lots of colourful narrative, lots of stories. I didn't feel that I was going outside philosophy in order to find illustrations. It was more the case that philosophy was already there out in the world if you looked for it."

If provoked, Réé will admit that he is a man with a mission. He is angry that a lot of 20th-century philosophers have been so anxious to take an academically respectable scientific approach to philosophy that "they actually turn their back on what makes philosophy deserve to earn an important place in culture. It's terribly unfortunate that most people's idea of the subject is derived from books called *A History of Western Philosophy*. They sit on the same shelf as the atlas – and it does give you the sense of philosophy as a set of rather abstruse doctrines held dogmatically by rather boring people."

Candles stuck into old wine bottles gave a welcome air of informality to the late-night student quartets raising bows against the buzz of low laughter and chatter in the bar below the Senior Common Room. Haydn, who first wrote quartets for amateur players to enjoy with guests in their salons, would surely have approved.

LYNNIE WALKER
The first of three broadcast recitals from HaydnFest is on BBC Radio 3 tomorrow at 1pm, featuring the Brodsky Quartet

has developed a new mode of enquiry, which he describes as "philosophical history" – as distinct from a history of philosophy which draws philosophy back into the territory that was initially staked out by Plato, asking simple questions about our perceptions of everyday life and culture through looking at our changing attitudes through history. He would like to be come for philosophy "what Simon Schama is for history", though he recols slightly when it is suggested that there could be any similarity between his methods of reigniting a child-like wonder in the subject and those of Jostein Gaarder, the author of the teenage philosophy hit, *Sophie's World*.

Before I leave the flat, I ask him whether the extensive philosophical expedition he has taken through concepts of the voice and theories of language has changed his childhood reflections that he would "far rather be deaf than blind".

"I'd rather be blind," he says, and then there is a long, thoughtful pause... "If it had to be one or the other."

I See a Voice is published by HarperCollins on Monday



DANCE

CINDERELLA
ENGLISH NATIONAL BALLET
LONDON COLISEUM

THIS CINDERELLA is much the best of Prokofiev's three act-tale scores, but you would scarcely know that from English National Ballet's production. The music is somewhat raucously played by the ENB Orchestra under Patrick Flynne direction, losing the composer's contrast between sweet and harsh; but, more important, the choreography seems to me to run directly counter to what Prokofiev intended.

True, Michael Corder has assembled a multiplicity of steps: not quite one to every note, but enough to satisfy ballerinas who want only to see dancers in hectic movement all the time. But he seems not to have noticed that Cinderella has a story, and that the score was written to serve that story. And the sense of form which Corder shows in his best works entirely forsakes him here.

So the dancers who represent the four seasons, for instance, come on and do more or less interchangeable duets, with nothing spring-like, jummy, autumnal or wintry about them. Even the characters whyou would expect to have strong individuality fail to show it: the stepsisters, the fairy godmother, even the heroine. A bit of pointing and shoving for the former; a wispy benevolence for the latter pair; is there even we come to any sense of purpose.

Consequently, the ballet lacks both fun and romance. The occasional bits that aim at comedy don't get much of a laugh, and s for the love story, you will have to look hard and use a lot of imagination to find anything moving or rousing. Even the charismatic Patrick Armand as the Prince in the opening cast could not achieve more than a temporary suspension of incredulity.

His Cinderella (four others are due to follow) was Larissa Ponomarenko: as smooth and elegant a dancer as you would expect from her Petersberg training, but too impassive focially most of the time to make as much of an impression as she ought. The rest of the cast was never less than proficient, but that they had to do held them back. Jimone Clarke and Elisabeth Miege as the stepsisters deserve credit for generating at least a sense of liveliness; Christopher Hampson's elegance as the dancing-master was sabotaged because his role just doesn't make sense, either: the implausible lesson he gives or in his appropriate guest spot at the ball.

David Walker's designs are as dull as the choreography (he is thankful for small mercies; at least they void the tacky extravagance of his Covent Garden *Cinderella* for Ashton's version). The tiny tot sitting in front of me with her ballet-critic mama looked bored all evening, and who could blame her?

JOHN PERCIVAL

In tune with the buzz

THINK OF any Haydn string quartet between Op 0 and Op 77 No 2 and you could have heard it last weekend, not in Estorick's but in Manchester. Quartets of all ages, from the younger and of Chetham's School of Music to the old hands of Quatuor Nostalgique – persuaded out of quartet retirement for the occasion – assembled for a HaydnFest at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM).

Legendary quartets such as the Amadeus and the Aeolian were represented by Siegmund Nissel and Emanuel Hurwitz passing on some of their vast experience in masterclasses. Haydn enthusiasts, many eagerly following scores, mingled with student string players and curious casual concert-goers: instrument makers pored their wares; academics discussed the merits of various editions.

On paper HaydnFest represented the kind of exercise beloved of concert promoters,

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more obsessed with numbers than creative planning: musically it was a refreshing and stimulating way to start the new year. It was ambitious, too, in that, unlike the Edinburgh Festival's 1996 series of 46 quartets in 18 concerts, HaydnFest somehow managed to squeeze all 69 quartets into 14 concerts in just three packed days, with performances at morning, noon and night, in tea and coffee concerts, and even in a HaydnFest children's concert.

Whether or not you go with 68 string quartets or 69, whether you count the string quartet version of *Seven Last Words*, whether you are taken in by the spurious pieces by Hoffstetter, some of which were

slipped into the *Nachtstück* concerts here, you couldn't fail to applaud this opportunity to hear the complete string quartets of the composer who invented the medium as we know it. If, as Goethe once said, "a good quartet is like listening to a stimulating conversation between four intelligent people" then HaydnFest had plenty of of party, but fortunately not all of its party, but fortunately I missed them.

The Brodsky Quartet, all former RNCM students and now celebrating 25 years as a quartet, opened their concert with one of the most dramatic openings in the whole of Haydn's quartets, Op 54 No 2 in C.

But this was perhaps a too civilised conversation, all poised charm at the expense of theatricality. There was a disappointing absence of interplay between the instruments in the chirrupy quavers of Op 33 No 3 in C, "The Bird", and a

lyrically well-observed look at the social stresses of bereavement, the play is also a shrewd meditation on the subjective, competitive and self-preserving nature of memory that so often distorts and tailors recollections to fit in with a personal agenda or sense of grievance. It was a big hit three years ago on its first airing at Hampstead.

Someone has had the commercially smart idea of reviving Terry Johnson's production with starry principals, and now, after a successful regional tour, it arrives in the West End. The casting is cunning in that two of the actresses are already lodged in the public mind as fictional daughters: Samantha Bond from *Amy's View* and Julia Sawalha from *Ab Fab*. Bond brings a fine, caustic superciliousness and an air of heartache to the role of Mary, the posh, high-flying doctor and victim of her own success who harbours a boyfriend who won't leave his ME-stricken wife, and

Skeletons at a funeral

THEATRE

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Teresa, played by Alison Seaman in magnificent form. A frantic health food freak who pops "completely organic" nerve pills, Steadman's Teresa puts on one of the best displays of mountinously drunk behaviour I have ever seen. As unstoppable as the whisky bottle, she is gripping what she gives vent to home truths of wildly variable accuracy. Then, heaving her slumped head up from the bedsheet, she demands: "How could you do it to me?"

Johnson's highly entertaining production keeps skillful control of the tone, which has to encompass everything from whooping, drug-fuelled high jinks as whinersortng mother's things out turns into a giddy fashion parde, to Mary's troubled meetings with Margot Leicester's reavenant spirit.

The production can't disguise the fact that the dramatic current flows with a fluctuating strength, or that the ghost is a bit *de trop*, or that some of the themes sit a little humpily on the proceedings. But Stephenson has a sure instinct for the quirky side of his one character arrives having spent six hours trapped in a train with "a woman from Carlisle who runs a puppet theatre for the deaf", and is certainly a talent to watch.

JULIA TAYLOR

A version of this review appeared in last editions of yesterday's paper.

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Brad Fraser has written a play about an openly gay politician. Fortunately, Martin Yesterday still has things to hide. By Paul Taylor

You don't pay the fruit...

When it was announced a couple of years ago that Brad Fraser, the award-winning cult Canadian dramatist, had signed a contract with Disney, one's first thought was: what on earth is he going to write for them? *101 Bisexuals*? In plays such as *Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love* and *Poor Super Man*, Fraser has situated his dark, laconically witty art on the slippery boundaries between diverse sexual orientations and identities. Whether charting the travails of a transsexual denied the operation she so desperately craves because she's dying of AIDS in *Poor Super Man*, or inserting a submissive gay man with a cleft palate into *The Ugly Man* this hilarious lust-in-dust B-movie makeover of Middleton's *Changeling*, Fraser has never been one to compromise, or to stint on graphic depictions of naked coupling. The Disney news was rather like hearing that Mark Ravenshield had been hired to present *Blue Peter*.

So when I rang him in Canada to talk about the English première of *Martin Yesterday* – his latest stage piece, which opens next week at Manchester's Royal Exchange – I was curious to know how this odd conjunction had fared. All too predictably it was a case of a movie written, paid for and not made.

"It's about a mad scientist who is magically able to change people's faces. The title was *Beauty*," he said.

Something tells you that the author of *The Ugly Man*, a play that's mischievously astute about the perverse attractions of repulsion ("I don't mind looking at your face," whispers the adoring gay character.)

"That won't be necessary," replies the hutch, disfigured bisexual, none too cryptically: does not conceive of beauty in any fun-for-all-the-family, *Beauty-and-the-Beast* sort of way.

Peter Hall remarks in his Diaries that you can learn an awful lot

about a playwright's creative personality from listening to the way he himself speaks. This is certainly true of Fraser, who has a deep, burly voice which (a bit like Gore Vidal's) is in piquant contrast to the knowing camp of what is being said. His speech rhythms have a similar flouncy cuttness to the exchanges in the plays, as when, in *Poor Super Man*, a married character lover exhibiting nude paintings of him, and tries to assert his rights.

"I inspired them," he pleads.

"You don't pay the fruit when you do a still life," comes the succinctly

He has situated his dark, laconically witty art on the slippery boundaries between diverse sexual orientations and identities

stinging reply, with its pointed pun on "fruit".

Fraser's wit is much more good humoured than that, though. Confessing that he has always been imaginatively drawn to outsiders, he reveals that his first teenage effort as a playwright was the helpfully entitled *Two Pariahs at a Bus-stop Late at Night*: "I mean, don't you almost feel like you've seen it."

Though the dramas to date have had an implicitly political edge, the title character in Fraser's new piece, *Martin Yesterday*, is the first career politician to feature in his work. The play follows the Prozac-propelled fortunes of Matt, the young married man who was forced out of the closet in *Poor Super Man*. Now a successful comic strip artist, he embarks on a relationship with

"I'm not afraid to say what I see, whether it's pleasant or not," comments Fraser, justifying his depiction of Martin, whose self-compromised political career he views as an illustration of how "we lack leadership with true integrity. Nobody seems to live up to their own expectations of themselves."

A strip-cartoon artist on the side, Fraser uses comic-book characters as symbols and metaphors, as when Super Man's concealed alien status provided, in that eponymous play, a sardonic parallel for the central character's marooned feeling of living a lie in the midst of strangers.

In *Martin Yesterday*, the parallel is more overtly political. Matt invents the Deceptive Elf ("this spy from Quebec who's trying to find out how

Martin, an appreciably older Toronto alderman. The most egregious gay politician in modern drama is the virulent real-life homosexual homophobe Roy Cohn, to whom Tony Kushner gave mythic dimensions in *Angels in America*, and who made just about the toughest figure imaginable for gay people to acknowledge as one of their own. Martin Yesterday is, by contrast, openly gay and HIV-positive, and, therefore, potentially prime paragon material.

As Matt's female business partner remarks: "I read an article that says people are actually more likely to vote for an out gay politician than a straight one, because they think the out person has more integrity."

But Martin Yesterday seems to have emerged from the closet to make more room for the unsavoury secrets he needs to bungle back in there. The instinct to help fellow homosexuals, admirable in his public life, becomes perverted in his private life to the kind of charity that creates mutual exploitation and heartless dependency.

Martin's taste, moreover, is for very young men such as Rex, the pan-sexual hustler with the coke problem who pays for his bed in Martin's apartment by letting him play abusive "daddy" fantasies with him.

"I'm pleased to hear, though, that

English Canada really feels about Quebecers". A drama about partnerships, commitment and separation is played against a background of cultural separatism in a nation that is itself like an unhappy, disputatious couple. Rows at the drawing-board in Matt's office raise the whole contentious issue of how far, if at all, oppressed minorities are interchangeable as metaphors of

each other. One "minority" that perhaps hasn't had its due in his work is that of women. Fraser's female characters tend to be underwritten, saddled with partner problems that are the palest shadow of those experienced by the men and given to looking at the gay community with a peevish mixture of envy and puzzled resentment.

Fraser has resurrected Violet, gay Matt's slow-on-the-uptake wife from *Poor Super Man*, in a forthcoming play, *Snake in the Fridge*, a piece he refers to, with a tantalising laugh, as "about a group of young people on the fringes of the sex industry who have a great time in a haunted house". And what has happened to poor divorced Violet? "She's become a pornographer."

From her previous CV, this would seem about as likely as her becoming the Dalai Lama. But maybe the highly talented Fraser has now graduated to the point where he can start to use women characters to test those sexual boundaries.

Martin Yesterday runs at the Royal Exchange in Manchester from 13 Jan to 6 Feb (0161-833 9833)



Brad Fraser: 'I'm not afraid to say what I see, whether it's pleasant or not'

Lorca, Dali, Buñuel: their naughtiness lives on

What connects Brecht with Spanish surrealism? Hayley Carmichael, of course. By David Benedict

UNTIL VERY recently, Hayley Carmichael was a fairly well kept secret. Not any more. Her hilarious, profoundly touching performance as an upper-class girl falling for a chauffeur in Kathryn Hunter's *Almeida/The Right Size* production of *Mr Puntilla and His Man Matti*, has changed all that.

Even as she natters before a performance, you see her giving herself up to ideas. Her expression keeps changing as emotions register across her freshly scrubbed face and thoughts race behind her eyes. Her brow furrows with puzzlement, then suddenly her expression changes: bewilderment whisked away by laughter. It all sounds very "actorish", but that's the last word you would use to describe her.

Although she's around 30, she looks extraordinarily young – she's

extremely good at innocence – and at the same time much, much older, helped by a Judi Dench-like crack in her voice. Best of all, she has the rare gift that true comic performers have: being able to stretch time. Her characters hit upon an idea and her directness and physical economy draw you in as she works through a particular moment in a way that looks utterly spontaneous.

Not that she's a bundle of confidence. "The other night I came off after the first scene and said to another actor, 'Oh, they really don't want me to come back on stage.' And he said, 'Why ever not?' You realise that personal paranoia is so not interesting. You can't indulge yourself

like that. Just get on with it."

Mr Puntilla closed on Saturday and on Thursday she joins her company, *Told By An Idiot*, to perform *I Weep at My Piano* as part of the London International Mime Festival.

The show is drawn from the work of Lorca, Dali and Buñuel, but don't expect a three-for-the-price-of-one bio-drama. "We were inspired by their imagination and their well-naughty spirit. It's a piece in a image. We wanted to make a piece

about them but also about something that we understood, so as to open it up to an audience. Things about friendship, loving someone who doesn't love you..."

Told By An Idiot is a strikingly successful threesome. They met at Middlesex College, where John Wright was a teacher and Hayley Carmichael and Paul Hunter were students. A few years later Hunter suggested working together on a tiny part of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. That became *On the Verge of Exploding* and, a year later, Wright joined them to do it at Edinburgh. Gradually, with the help of their manager Nick Sweeting, they began to tour further afield. They formalised

this ad hoc working arrangement, producing the daff and delightful *You Haven't Embraced Me Yet*, although they don't work as a permanent ensemble. They prefer sometimes to work apart with other companies, to keep their own collaborations fresh.

In the past they've been mistakenly bracketed as "physical theatre" but their plans include a middle-scale project with Northern Stage, and Biyi Bandele-Thomas is writing them a play – a first, as all their previous work has been devised. Hayley Carmichael thrives on being fed by the input of others and she has been working in all manner of places. Prior to *Mr Puntilla*, she played Cordelia to Kathryn Hunter's King Lear at the Leicester Haymarket and the Young Vic, but has done very little text-based work. However, she will do Marivaux's *The Dispute* with Neil Bartlett in a co-production between the Lyric Hammersmith and the RSC.

Her rising profile slightly unnerves her. "It's strange how you are perceived to have 'made it'. Because people see your photo somewhere they say, 'Oh, you're doing well', or 'You've finally made it'. That's all very nice but I think *Told By An Idiot* got somewhere from the very beginning." Hope lights up her face. "We made a show about love and pain and all the rest of it, and that's what we'd wanted to do and we're still doing it."

I Weep at My Piano is at BAC from Thursday (0171-223 2223)

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NEXT WEEK

The Shape of Arts to Come

Our series on the men and women set to become movers and shakers in the 21st century continues next Monday with Mick Gordon of the Gate Theatre



ON THE FRINGE

DOMINIC CAVENDISH

I'VE HEARD of product placement, but *A Special Offer* takes the biscuit and poses with it. Where most firms that help out small productions have to content themselves with a token mention on an Ad programe sheet, Sharp's Bedrooms gets top billing in the rising theatre designers Alice Power's and Alice Purcell's contribution to the London International Mime Festival: an entire "Buckingham" suite has been built in the Young Vic studio, and Sharp's logo is displayed on a help desk.

But the bedding people must have a sense of humour, as, in dissecting the consumerist heart of modern coupledom, *A Special Offer* mocks the sterile aesthetic of the ideal home and the fitted interior. A prematurely middle-aged husband and wife (Mick Barnfather and Lisa Gornick), run through precisely observed daily routines with no sense of progression but a continual air of self-congratulation. They go to bed, wake up, make the bed, and immediately wind down

again, drowsing on about gardening, commuting and other couples. Their relationship is as sexless as their red satin shiny duvet. Insistent pan-piped Muzak (courtesy of Nigel Piper, a John Hegley acolyte); customer announcements – ("Mr Fisher has been separated from his wife"); and the intrusions of a opera-singing shop assistant (Rebecca Gale) – threaten to expose the relationship as a bizarre sales ploy. But even when the wigs are off, the behaviour remains resolutely display-oriented.

There are some angry confessions in which each partner outlines his or her frustrations and fears for their individuality, but banality gets the upper hand. "I feel I want to say something about world peace, but I'm not sure what it is," the wife says, adding, after a beat: "I'm not looking forward to the menopause."

At times it feels as though the scenario is too two-dimensional to provide wall-to-wall interest. But bursts of surreal activity

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It's all downhill from here

Paying off your mortgage early leaves you free to spend more on enjoying life.
By Nic Cicutti

The idea of paying off our mortgages off early is one that most of us have entertained. And why not? It offers the opportunity of doing more exciting things with the cash. And, at last, there are growing signs that home buyers are recognising this fact. Increasing numbers of borrowers are asking for shorter mortgage terms than ever before.

They still want a good deal – such as an attractive fixed rate. But, just as importantly, they want the flexibility to decide exactly how long they will pay this mortgage for. An ideal loan would combine the two options.

The good news is that it is far easier to shorten the life of a home loan than you think. While it may cost a little more in the short run, setting aside an extra pound or two a week can look months, perhaps years, off a 25-year mortgage term: saving you thousands of pounds of interest in the process.

The reason for these potential savings are simple. Whenever we take out a home loan, we agree to pay it off at a certain rate of interest. Over a typical 25-year term, the total amount of interest that must be repaid can be triple the sum originally borrowed.

Take an £80,000 repayment loan. At variable rates of 7.7 per cent, monthly payments are £592.37 and the interest payable over 25 years is £113,025. Simply by paying an extra £10 a month the interest saved would be £6,641. The repayment period itself would be reduced to 23 years and eight months.

Paying an extra £30 a month towards the same mortgage would bring interest savings of £14,657, reducing its term to 21 years and 10 months. An additional payment of £50 cuts the term to 20 years and four months, saving £20,983 in interest.



Why spend your most active years being frugal? By paying your mortgage over a shorter period, you could be saving money and having fun

In fact, one relatively unexplored concept among borrowers is that of early mortgage repayment as an investment in itself. Paying a mortgage more quickly is equivalent to earning the same rate of interest as the amount actually charged on the loan itself – tax free.

So, repaying an 8 per cent variable rate loan becomes the equivalent of earning 10.56 per cent gross for lower-rate taxpayers, or 11.2 for those on a higher marginal rate.

Many borrowers may have taken

out a 25-year endowment policy or may have made sizeable contributions into a pension, on the assumption that the 25 per cent tax-free lump sum will be enough to pay off the loan at retirement. They assume that, having made the decision several years ago, they have to live with it today.

However, with annuity rates falling as they have been, people would be better off using all their pension fund for retirement purposes. As for endowments, it still

makes sense to keep on paying into one until it matures. Instead of linking it to the new mortgage, borrowers can choose a traditional capital and interest option. The policy will still produce a large lump sum – but now it can be used for any purpose, not just to repay the loan.

As interest rates fall, so does the monthly cost of a mortgage. In turn, this means that, if we could afford to keep payments at the same rate as before, the loan is repaid that much faster.

It also makes sense to take advantage of falling long-term interest rates – fixed mortgages are now lower than they have been for three years.

Many of the most flexible loans are offered by lenders who calculate interest payable on a daily basis rather than once a year, which means that any payments are instantly credited to your mortgage account. Among the best flexible loan providers in the market are Standard Life Bank, Legal & Gen-

eral, First Active and Virgin One. The last two offer full banking facilities as part of the mortgage, meaning that you can treat the loan itself as a bank account.

FirstMortgage, the telephone-based home loan provider, has another solution. The company has a 5.75 per cent fixed-rate deal. The difference is that it can be selected for any period between five and 15 years. In effect, you choose the period you want to pay the loan back over. This loan is not quite so flexi-

ble as the others, but it makes up for it by its cheap rates.

There is a price to pay for ditching a loan part-way through. Redemption penalties are 1 per cent for each year of the mortgage term, with 5 per cent payable at any time in the last five years. So, a 10-year repayment period starts with a 10 per cent redemption charge, falling to 5 per cent in year five and thereafter.

However, the penalty is on the amount still owed: if you have paid back a huge chunk of the loan already, the redemption will be correspondingly smaller.

Some people assume that early redemption penalties will negate the benefits of making even part-repayments of a fixed loan. But this need not be so.

For example, a fixed-rate mortgage of 5.75 per cent for the last five years of a mortgage has a redemption penalty of 5 per cent of the

Relatively unexplored is the concept of early repayment as an investment in itself

amount paid. If, say, someone wanted to part-repay a £10,000 lump sum after three years, they would incur a penalty of £500. However, the interest saved would more than compensate for that loss.

Over the remaining two-year period at 5.75 per cent, the saving would be £1,150. On a 10-year mortgage, the cost of the same part-repayment, also after three years, would be £700. But the interest saved in the remaining seven years would be £4,025.

In all these cases the motivating factor is what else you might be doing with your money if it isn't being used to pay off a monthly loan. And most of us can think of quite a few things to do with it.

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A terrible mistake

I HAVE discovered something about computer screens. If you stare at them long enough, they become three-dimensional, like those interactive posters that look like a bunch of scribbles and are really a floating marijuana leaf.

Of course, it helps if your eyes are out of focus, and what with the welling-up when I think of my boyfriend Olivier, and the sleepless nights, mine are in that condition most of the time.

Olivier has refused to take my calls for a week now, and I couldn't be more miserable. I've even started having nightmares. One minute I'm sound asleep, the next I'm burbling through a multi-coloured vortex like something out of Star Trek. When I crash to the ground, I can see I'm in a landscape dreamt up by someone on LSD: overly bright flowers, weird insects... But the only sound is a quiet sobbing coming from behind a small, emerald hill.

When I go to see what's making the noise, I find a



THE TRADER

white rabbit with its hack me. There's an elaborate old-fashioned pocket watch on the ground in front of it, and between sohs it pats it half-heartedly and guips. "How could she do this to me?" And then it turns to look at me, and it's Olivier, with one long ear sticking up and the other flopping pathetically over his right eye. Then I wake up, racking with guilt and crying.

At work, I have thrown myself into as many deals as

possible, in a largely vain effort to distract myself. It's just as well I don't have to work in euros, in the circumstances. The FX boys – indistinguishable from the rabble at the last place – may have been having a high old time of it since "euro Monday", but Findlay's still twiddling his thumbs waiting for someone to be more adventurous with the new currency.

Anyway, in between frenzies of manic deal-doing, I have successfully avoided talking to Jaap. After all, what am I supposed to say to him? "Hello, I'm afraid I don't remember anything about it, but did we have a mad night of passion after the Christmas lunch? Only if so, you left your watch on my bedside table." Exactly, you can see my problem.

So I felt more than a little uncomfortable when he strolled over yesterday and flopped down into the spare chair next to me. "You look as if you need cheering up," he said gently. I muttered that it'd sort itself out, and he looked as if

he didn't believe me but wasn't going to pry.

"Life would be a lot easier without other people, wouldn't it?" he continued. "I am in terrible trouble with my sister. She's furious that I've lost the watch she bought me when I left to come to London."

I felt sick. Of all the topics in all the world, why did he have to start on this one?

I was desperately trying to think of a way of changing the subject when Jaap said, "I remember that at the Christmas lunch the strap kept coming undone, so I took it off and put it on the table. I called the restaurant the next day, but they couldn't find it."

I froze. A flash of memory. Being last to leave the table. Seeing Jaap's watch lying there and picking it up and tucking it into my bag. The bag I turned out drunkenly on my bedside table as I hunted for my contact-lens case that night.

No more mystery. Only, how do I explain this to Jaap? And how do I convince Olivier?



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c £19,000 + Generous Corporate Benefits

SEI

Our client is seeking an outstanding part qualified candidate with at least one year's experience of both financial and management accounts - including journals and complex reconciliations. You will be hungry for a challenging role with superb promotional prospects in a friendly, team based environment. Full encouragement and support with your studies will be given. Ref 274645

Telephone 0171 234 0393 or write to 3 Southwark Street, London SE1 1RQ. Fax 0171 403 3937

ACCOUNTANCY ADDITIONS

Adding Experience to Recruitment

Strand

Telecom Accountant

£25-28,000

WC1/Central

Centrally based international telecommunications company requires a finalist to join their expanding team. The successful candidate will be expected to take full responsibility of the finance function. Experience of management and financial accounts is a must along with ad-hoc reporting and analysis. Excellent remuneration package is available for a dynamic and ambitious person to join this vibrant environment. Ref 275164

Management Accountant

£22,000 + Study

WC2

This household name in the entertainment industry offers a superb opportunity for candidates looking for a progressive second step. Some experience within a management accounts role would be advantageous but not essential. Most importantly, a keen individual in the early stages of CIMA is sought, to strengthen the team and progress with the company. An excellent opportunity to fulfil your potential. Ref 270317

Finance Assistant

£16,000 + Full Study

WC2

Rare opportunity for an ambitious self-starter with circa one years experience in finance to join this high profile media organisation. Initially you will be involved with invoice processing and assisting with ad-hoc reporting but will progress quickly to take any additional responsibilities. Full study assistance will be given to candidates committed to studying AAT, CIMA or ACCA. Ref 275156

Telephone 0171 379 5333 or write to Centric House, 390-391 The Strand, London WC2R 0LT. Fax 0171 836 0655

Operational Control Project Accountant

A leading global corporate and investment bank is seeking to recruit a new Operational Control Project Accountant. The ideal candidate would be a CIMA qualified accountant and be able to demonstrate strong financial service operational experience with a practical knowledge of

activity based costing systems. Please send your CV and details of your current compensation package to:

P.O. Box No. 12942,
Independent Newspapers Plc,
1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf,
London E14 7DL.

BUSINESS ANALYST
to operate within global sales management. Responsibilities will include analysis of P&L and balance sheet, profitability analysis and project management. The successful candidate will be a qualified accountant and possess 2/3 year post degree accounting/finance related work experience. The salary offered is commensurate with experience. If you possess the skills required for this position, please send your CV to PO Box 21015A, Islington, London N1 2XQ.

MANAGER OF PROGRAM TRADING TECHNOLOGY
to take responsibility for the new European platform. The work will primarily involve leading a team of developers and support staff in developing and enhancing trading systems. The successful candidate will be educated to degree and possess a minimum of five years relevant industry experience ideally combining European and North America experience including knowledge of "imagine" software, C++, Sybase and ODBC techniques. The salary offered is commensurate with experience. If you possess the skills required for this position, please send your CV to PO Box 21015A, Islington, London N1 2XQ.

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Market Specialist - India Settlements

A unique role, a unique market • Bournemouth

The Chase Manhattan Bank is one of the USA's largest banking institutions, with assets valued at over \$256 billion and operations in more than 30 countries. We provide top tier clients, including financial institutions, governments and corporations, with the services and expertise they need to raise capital, invest, move and manage their financial assets.

Our Global Trade Services Division in Bournemouth has formed a new, specialist team to provide a dedicated service to the huge-potential India Market. The focal point for all India communication and actions, this busy and fast-growing team interfaces with stockbrokers, agent banks, and other departments within Chase to support Chase clients' trading strategies.

You'll need to have a genuine understanding of the realities of the India Market, probably having worked in Emerging Markets Securities, plus the ability to learn and retain complex technical information. Proven interpersonal, communication and team leadership skills will be essential, as well as excellent organisational, prioritising and problem-solving ability. Flexible

and resourceful, you must be eager to see beyond the parameters of your role and build a career with a major world bank.

In addition to a competitive salary the package includes a housing allowance, non-contributory pension, medical insurance, on-site fitness centre, as well as a very active sports and social club.

If you can meet the challenge of the growing India Market, please send your full CV, together with current salary details/expectations, to the HR Resourcing Manager, The Chase Manhattan Bank, Chaseside, Bournemouth BH7 7DR. Please quote reference BN82/1 on both your application and envelope. Closing date: 26 January 1999.

GLOBAL HEAD DERIVATIVES ANALYTICS

Up to £100k base + benefits · City based

Our client is the global debt markets division of one of the largest and most strongly capitalised financial services groups in the world. It provides a comprehensive range of innovative debt origination, structuring and distribution services to corporate, government and institutional clients. The Derivatives division is now seeking to recruit a Senior Quant to oversee the quantitative support of the Interest Rate Derivatives desk in London.

The successful candidate will be responsible for a lead role in modelling, pricing and new product development for FI and exotic derivatives, swaps/ swaps/caps & floor.

Qualifications:

- Minimum 5 years experience of Quantitative Research, preferably gained in the US
- Background in academic research
- Extensive experience in the development of large financial applications using C++
- Mathematics Degree and a Quantitative PhD
- Strong leadership skills
- Strong communication skills

To apply, please write with full CV, quoting ref. 2279, to: The Response Management Team, AIA (Associates in Advertising), 5 St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BH.

Your application will only be sent to this client, however please clearly state any organisation to which your details should not be forwarded.

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■ HR MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS ■

FINANCE

Expanding investment firm requires a graduate with at least three years experience dealing equity derivatives. Knowledge of US, UK and Far East markets are essential. Must have outstanding quantitative and analytical skills. Strong PC/systems skills will include spreadsheet development on Excel. Derivatives risk and credit knowledge a must. Foreign languages a plus. Salary negotiable. Contact box number P.O. Box 12953, The Independent Newspaper, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5AP.

International Bank requires

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
to identify and market opportunities for the provision of software services in the UK. This will involve developing business strategies, establishing customer requirements, negotiating and preparing detailed business proposals, liaison with customers and negotiating commercial and technical aspects internally and externally.

The successful candidate will possess a minimum masters level education with at least 4/5 years IT related work experience. The salary offered is commensurate with experience. If you possess the skills required for this position, please send your CV to P.O. Box 21015B, Islington, London N1 2XQ.

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Lombard Asset Finance Group are looking to recruit an experienced Senior Analyst to work with their Financial Systems Programme.

Skills and experience required:

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- Planning, delivery and rollout of Oracle Financials and Hyperion Enterprise
- Cost benefit modelling
- Process Mapping
- Planning and delivery of end user training
- Budgetary Control and Project Planning
- Team leadership
- Effective communication
- Customer focused

Please reply enclosing resume of career to date to:

Kym Denlin, HR Manager, Lombard Asset Finance Group, 3 Princess Way, Redhill, Surrey RH1 1NP

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International Projects for Youth Exchange

FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION DIRECTOR & COMPANY SECRETARY

BERKSHIRE

£24,000-£26,000

(depending on experience)

GAP is an expanding educational charity based in Reading which arranges voluntary work overseas for young people in their year out between school and higher education/employment.

We now wish to recruit a Finance and Administration Director to join our dedicated team. Responsibilities encompass all aspects of financial management including statutory reporting, management accounting, budgetary control and administration/company secretarial requirements.

The successful candidate for this demanding role must be able to make an immediate impact on the team activities and will play an active part in the future direction of GAP. You will be a qualified accountant with proven IT ability; you will have considerable management and general commercial experience. An interest in the development of young people would be an advantage.

Interested individuals should send a copy of their CV quoting reference GAD/1 and a hand-written letter of application including details of 2 referees to:

Mr Lucy Miskin, Ref. FAD, GAP House, 44 Queens Road, Reading RG1 4BB

Closing date for applications is 29th January 1999.

If you do not hear from us by 9th February 1999, you should assume that your application has not been successful.

Analyst Program to 30K ***

Analyst/Programmer with min. 3 years experience with Siemens Nixdorf Comet systems required to undertake Y2K Conversion. Business Basic exp. essential as well as exp of upgrading Comet sites. SAP R/3 experience would be extremely beneficial.

Applications with CV to:

Craig Timms, Colonial Software Ltd, Vigilant House, 120 Wilton Road, Victoria, London SW1V 1JZ

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OVERSEAS FINANCE DIRECTOR

The successful candidate will be literate in both English and Greek, heading up the finance team. You will be a qualified accountant with proven IT ability; you will have considerable management and general commercial experience.

Knowledge of Cyprus and Greek and Cypriot tax laws would be an advantage.

Responsibilities include:

Reviewing existing management accounting and operational systems in UK, Greece and Cyprus.

Implementing new systems, reporting systems in the overseas offices.

Ensuring compliance with Greek and Cypriot legal and tax matters.

Reviewing costing systems of overseas suppliers information.

Listing with overseas offices to ensure the correct application of computer and software systems.

Controlling foreign currency exposure and maintaining close contact with Greek bankers.

Please send CV with covering letter to David Wilson at

Interaction Consultants Ltd, 1 Torrington Park, London N12 9SU

Leading International Investment Bank requires

An experienced Equity Analyst with specialisation in the Polish market. The successful individual will be educated to MBA level and have a proven minimum of two years experience as an Equity Analyst within the Polish market.

The successful applicant will have a strong analytical background and proven intellectual ability.

Please send your CV to:

P.O. Box 21015C, Islington, London N1 2XQ

International Bank Requires Accountant

To provide accounting support for the custody group. The role will include responsibility for managing accounting matrices, managing AD-HOC finance-based projects, audit management and report preparation.

The successful candidate will be a qualified accountant and possess a minimum 2/3 years accounting/finance experience.

The salary offered is commensurate with experience.

If you possess the skills required for this position, please send your CV to P.O. Box 21015A, Islington, London N12XQ.

APPOINTMENTS DIARY

Monday
IT, Science, Engineering
Tuesday
Media, Marketing, Sales

Wednesday
Finance, Legal, Secretarial
Thursday
Education, Graduate
Sunday
Public, General

Hungry for success

I've never been grossly overweight, but at 19 I joined a Weight Watchers meeting when a friend wanted to lose several stone and needed my support. I liked the fact that I was allowed to eat everyday food rather than having to adopt a fad diet or take diet pills, and I soon reached my target weight. At the time I thought Weight Watchers was just a local group, in our cosy village hall. Three years later I attended an interview for an interesting-sounding job. It was only once I got to the office that I learnt it was Weight Watchers. While I was watching the bustle and bustle of marketing and accounts, the penny finally dropped and I realised that this was an international company.

I became secretary to Linda, who was then the trainee manager responsible for 600 leaders. Before, I'd worked for the Civil Service and was used to addressing colleagues as Mr this and Mrs that. But this is a friendly, laid-back company where everyone is known by their first name, so it took a while to learn who was who within the firm. Linda is American and says what she thinks, which I found a little frightening at first, yet it gave me confidence to see everything she had achieved for herself. We worked as a team for four or five years, but when she got promoted I didn't feel ready to join her and take on what I saw as a high-profile, go-getting job.

Being a bit of a stick-in-the-mud I was not keen to change. But after 18 months I had enough confidence to join Linda in her new position as vice-chairman and found my new job wasn't so different. The big change was that I had to learn to deal with far more senior people: organising a conference for up to 50 managers could prove stressful, but it was also rewarding.

Obviously when you work for Weight Watchers you get an awareness of what you are eating, but everyone here is a different size. We are employed for our skills, not our figures – it's not the office of skinny women I'd envisaged. Admittedly the nature of our work means we think about food most of the time, which can make us hungry. If people see me eating something fattening at a social gathering they often tease me, or will confess to feeling guilty about eating in front of me – it's interesting how many people feel guilty about food.

At this time of year, after the Christmas

JULIE POELVOORDE IS PA TO LINDA HUETT, THE VICE CHAIRMAN OF OPERATIONS AT WEIGHT WATCHERS UK LTD, PART OF AN INTERNATIONAL COMPANY



After the Christmas binge, we know that the phones will soon start ringing non-stop

John Lawrence

bingeing, we know that the phones will soon start ringing non-stop: even I recently went back to Weight Watchers meetings, having put on rather more weight than I wanted to. We don't drag people in from the street; it's up to individuals whether they want to lose weight or not, but like the Government we do want to encourage healthy eating. Mind you, it's not all lettuce leaves and tomatoes; if you want biscuits you can have them, because there's always tomorrow.

Although I am sure that there are male Weight Watchers out there too, it's quite a female-orientated company full of women who in many cases have been housewives themselves, and understand the pressures on women running a home. It's one thing being a high-profile dieter like Oprah [Winfrey], with people to cook for

ber, but it's a different ball game for a normal person who has to provide large meals for her children and husband. As a mother myself, I don't think I would have been able to do this job without Linda's understanding, with three teenage daughters of her own she reassures me about my 12-year-old son. We are close: if I've got problems I will confide in her, and every Christmas my family visits hers.

I think that both Linda and my colleagues have a lot to do with the fact that I stayed here for so long. Although I feel secure in my job I don't get bored, as we are constantly developing new projects. As someone who didn't like change, I have come full circle.

IT TOOK me three days to work up the nerve to go to the bathroom in Oscar Katz's penthouse – three days with crossed legs, gratefully rushing off on errands in the outside world – and now I'm kicking myself because I could have had a whole three days' more dining out. But finally I worked up the trust in my new boss. I was convinced, rightly, that there wouldn't be a lock on the inside, in the middle of a long afternoon on the phone ringing round every tabloid and men's magazine hack in the country, inviting them to the PussyKat Club's Pussy of the Year competition (well, almost). Well, it was either that or bust laughing. And now I have to pop back in every hour or so, whether or not I need the loo, just to check.

Oscar Katz's bathroom: my mum would have kittens if she knew. I've got used to the bedroom, with its purple satin sheets, in-bedhead stereo and purple satin tenting, because one of my duties is to check the bedside minibar and restock it with quarter-bottles of champagne – but the bathroom is something else. It's a monument to everything to do with water and nothing to do with washing. Well, there's a bidet – gold-plated – in the corner, but it seems to contain mostly white satin G-strings. Otherwise, it's a place for splashing around while looking at yourself.

For a start, the whole place is lined with mirrors, and when I say the whole place, I mean that you can actually look up your own skirt as you cross the floor. I find it disconcerting seeing myself on the loo, but each to his own taste, I guess. The bath isn't so much a bath as a private bordello, being big enough for six, with just jet streams, but a wave machine. The shower isn't so much a shower as a car wash. Oscar has a body-length whirling loofah thing that goes on at the flick of a switch and scrapes off those dead skin cells while you lean against it. I haven't worked out where he keeps his unguents, but he must have loads stashed behind one of the mirrors, for no one in the history of the world has ever smelled so chemical. They'd label him a national disaster if he were in North America.

This is the weirdest job I've ever done. I work from 2pm to 10pm every day, following Oscar around, getting drinks for people, calling the chauffeur, sending out for sushi and timetabling his assignations. I quickly worked out that my own morals were totally safe with the old roué, as I'm obviously not his type. I haven't got white permed hair piled on my head, frosted pink lipstick and a black leather bra, for a start, and my name isn't Trixie, Vixen or LuLu – and I passed 19 some time ago. I guess there comes a time in every woman's life when she realises she is past it. For certain activities, I never realised my moment would come at 23.

The Pussy of the Year competition is in fact The Search for London's Loveliest Lap-dancer. My job over the next two weeks is to send out invites to everyone Oscar can think of, chase up a few former game show hosts and disc jockeys to pad the celebrity list, and laugh at Oscar's jokes.

Oh, and try hard to tell Trixie (no calls) from Trina (put straight through, leaves different-coloured hairs in sink from those on her head).

So I emerged from the bathroom, trying hard to keep a straight face and not cause offence, though the breast-shaped door handle had nearly tipped me over the edge. "Well," said Oscar from the pink inflatable Marilyn Monroe lips chair, "I was wondering if you were related to the Queen and never went at all."

"Oh, no," I said, finding myself suddenly forced to sneeze. "I go."

Oscar lit a 6-in-long cigar. "Oh, by the way," he said, "Sorry about the trolleys in the footbath, but you can't machine-wash them, you see." He smiled proudly. "Ladies say I've got the best bum in London. Remind me to show you some time."

At his convenience



THE TEMP

This is the weirdest job I've ever done. I work from 2pm to 10pm every day, following Oscar around, getting drinks for people, calling the chauffeur, sending out for sushi and timetabling his assignations. I quickly worked out that my own morals were totally safe with the old roué, as I'm obviously not his type. I haven't got white permed hair piled on my head, frosted pink lipstick and a black leather bra, for a start, and my name isn't Trixie, Vixen or LuLu – and I passed 19 some time ago. I guess there comes a time in every woman's life when she realises she is past it. For certain activities, I never realised my moment would come at 23.

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TEL: 0171 293 2222

APPOINTMENTS: SECRETARIAL, OFFICE SUPPORT

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Career moves
Advertising, Publishing, Television, Design, Music, PR, Arts, Marketing, Broadcasting, Entertainment

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Fax or E-mail your CV to Barbara Miller or Judith Christian: FAX 0171 893 4157 or 4111

NO RECRUITMENT AGENCIES PLEASE

Ref: 0171 893 4157 or 4111

NO RECRUITMENT AGENCIES PLEASE

WARNER VILLAGE (0181-427 9009) ♦ Harrow on the Hill. *Enemy of the State* 12.10pm. 3pm, 6pm, 9pm, 9.30pm. Little Voice 12.35pm, 2.50pm, 5.05pm, 7.20pm, 9.40pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 11.25am, 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.30pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 11.45am, 2pm, 4.45pm, 7.05pm. *Psycho* 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.10pm. *Rush Hour* 12.30pm, 2.50pm, 5.10pm, 7.30pm, 9.50pm. *The Siege* 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6.45pm, 9.20pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 1.15pm, 4.40pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm. *What Dreams May Come* 6.20pm, 8.50pm.

HOLLOWAY ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ Holloway Road. *Enemy of the State* 12.20pm, 2.20pm, 5.05pm, 8.15pm. 5.50pm, 8pm, 8.35pm. Little Voice 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm. *Mission: Impossible* of Zorro 1.30pm, 7.55pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 1.05pm, 2.55pm, 4.45pm, 6.35pm. *Psycho* 1.05pm, 3.25pm, 6pm. *Rush Hour* 8.35pm. *The Siege* 12.25pm, 3.10pm, 6pm, 8.45pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm.

ILFORD ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ Gants Hill. *Enemy of the State* 12.20pm, 3.40pm, 5.20pm, 8.20pm. Little Voice 1.50pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm. *Psycho* 12.40pm, 3.20pm, 5.55pm, 8.35pm. *The Siege* 12.10pm, 2.50pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 1.20pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm.

ISLE OF DOGS THE SPACE ARTS CENTRE (0171-515 2453) DLR: Mudchute King and Country 8pm

KILBURN TRICYCLE CINEMA (0171-328 1000) ♦ Kilburn. Little Voice 6.30pm, 8.45pm (+ Short: Kings of Sam with 8.45pm performance only)

KINGSTON ABC OPTIONS (0870-9020409) BR: Kingston. *Enemy of the State* 2.25pm, 5.15pm, 8.05pm. *Psycho* 2.25pm, 6pm, 8.25pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 2.25pm, 6pm, 8.30pm.

MUSSENDEN HILL ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ Highgate. *Enemy of the State* 12.30pm, 3.20pm, 5.55pm, 8.30pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 12.10pm. *The Siege* 1pm, 3.40pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 2.05pm, 6.35pm, 8.50pm.

PECKHAM PREMIER (0181-235 3006) BR: Peckham Rye. *Enemy of the State* 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 9pm. Little Voice 5.05pm, 7.10pm, 9.15pm. *Psycho* 7.05pm, 7.20pm, 9.35pm. *The Siege* 5.20pm, 7.20pm, 9.35pm. *The Siege* 6.20pm, 8.50pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 2.05pm, 6.35pm, 8.50pm.

PURLEY ABC (0870-9020407) BR: Purley. *Enemy of the State* 4.45pm, 8pm. *The Siege* 5.10pm, 8.10pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 6.10pm, 8.35pm.

PUTNEY ABC (0870 9020401) BR: Putney. 8/ridge. *Enemy of the State* 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm. Little Voice 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.30pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 1.15pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm.

RICHMOND ODEON (08705 050007) BR: Richmond. *Enemy of the State* 3.40pm, 6pm, 9pm. Little Voice 5.05pm, 7.10pm, 9.15pm. *Psycho* 7.05pm, 7.20pm, 9.35pm. *The Siege* 5.20pm, 7.20pm, 9.35pm. *The Siege* 6.20pm, 8.50pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 2.05pm, 6.35pm, 8.50pm.

SIDCUP ABC (0541-555131) BR: Sidcup. *Psycho* 5.45pm, 8.30pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 6pm, 8.40pm.

STAPLES CORNER VIRGIN (0870-9070717) BR: Cricklewood. *Enemy of the State* 3.30pm, 5.50pm. Little Voice 4.15pm, 6.25pm, 8.35pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 2.15pm, 5.15pm. The Parent Trap 3.15pm, 5.30pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 12.10pm, 2.20pm, 4.15pm, 6.25pm, 8.35pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 2.15pm, 5.15pm. Little Voice 12.30pm, 3.50pm, 5.50pm, 7.50pm. *Psycho* 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8pm. *Rush Hour* 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. *What Dreams May Come* 8.20pm.

ROMFORD ABC (0870-9020419) BR: Romford. *Enemy of the State* 2.25pm, 5.20pm, 8.25pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 2.15pm, 6.10pm, 8.35pm.

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (08705 050007) BR: Romford. *Enemy of the State* 12.10pm, 2.20pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm. Little Voice 12.05pm, 2.10pm, 4.15pm, 6.25pm, 8.35pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 2.15pm, 5.15pm. The Parent Trap 3.15pm, 5.30pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 12.10pm, 2.20pm, 4.15pm, 6.25pm, 8.35pm. *Psycho* 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8pm. *Rush Hour* 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. *What Dreams May Come* 8.20pm.

SIDCUP ABC (0541-555131) BR: Sidcup. *Psycho* 5.45pm, 8.30pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 6pm, 8.40pm.

STAPLES CORNER VIRGIN (0870-9070717) BR: Cricklewood. *Enemy of the State* 3.30pm, 5.50pm. Little Voice 4.15pm, 6.25pm, 8.35pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 2.15pm, 5.15pm. The Parent Trap 3.15pm, 5.30pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 12.10pm, 2.20pm, 4.15pm, 6.25pm, 8.35pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 2.15pm, 5.15pm. Little Voice 12.30pm, 3.50pm, 5.50pm, 7.50pm. *Psycho* 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8pm. *Rush Hour* 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. *What Dreams May Come* 8.20pm.

STRATFORD NEW STRATFORD PICTURE HOUSE (0181-555 3366) BR: Stratford East. *Enemy of the State* 3.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm. Little Voice 1.35pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.30pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 3.0pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 2.25pm, 4.40pm. *Psycho* 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8pm. *Rush Hour* 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. *What Dreams May Come* 8.20pm.

STREATHAM ABC (0870-9020415) BR: Streatham Hill. *Enemy of the State* 2.10pm, 4.20pm, 6.40pm. *Psycho* 2.25pm, 4.50pm, 6.50pm, 8.55pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 2.30pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm. *What Dreams May Come* 8.20pm.

IPSWICH ODEON (08705 050007) BR: Brixton. *Psycho* 2.55pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 6pm, 8.40pm.

CHICHESTER NEW PARK FILM CENTRE (01243-786500) Out of Sight (15) 1.15pm. *Riverdance* (15) 1.30pm, 4.30pm, 7.30pm. *Psycho* 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8pm. *Rush Hour* 1.15pm, 4.15pm, 7.15pm.

CARDIFF CHAPTER ARTS CENTRE (01222-399665) Character (15) 2.30pm, 8pm. *The Eel* (18) 7.30pm.

BRIGHTON ARTS CINEMA (01273-602503) A Fistful of Dynamite (18) ✧ (P) (15) 4.30pm, 8.50pm. *The Mighty (PG)* 6.45pm.

BRISTOL WATERSHED (0117-925 3845) Insomniac (18) 6pm, 8.25pm. Little Voice (15) 6.05pm. Lou Reed: Rock and Roll Heart (NC) 6.35pm.

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE IPSWICH ODEON (0191-247 0500) Insomnia (18) 6pm, 8.25pm. Little Voice (15) 6.05pm. Lou Reed: Rock and Roll Heart (NC) 6.35pm.

IPSWICH ODEON (0191-247 0500) Insomnia (18) 6pm, 8.25pm. My Name is Joe (15) 6.15pm, 8.30pm.

NORWICH CINEMA CITY (01603-622047) The Boys (18) 5.45pm. *The Governess* (15) 8.15pm.

SURREY QUAYS UCI (0990 888990) ♦ Surrey Quays. *Enemy of the State* 4pm, 6.50pm, 8.45pm, 9.50pm. *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* Tue 6.20pm, 8.45pm. Little Voice 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 3.05pm, 6pm, 9pm. *The Parent Trap* 3.30pm, 7.15pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 4.10pm, 6.40pm. *Psycho* 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.40pm. *Rush Hour* 10pm. *The Siege* 3.40pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 3.50pm, 4pm, 2.40pm, 6.20pm, 7pm, 9.05pm. *What Dreams May Come* 9.20pm.

SUTTON UCI (0990 888990) ♦ Sutton. *Enemy of the State* 4pm, 6.50pm, 8.45pm, 9.50pm. *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* Tue 6.20pm, 8.45pm. Little Voice 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 3.05pm, 6pm, 9pm. *The Parent Trap* 3.30pm, 7.15pm. *The Prince of Egypt* 4.10pm, 6.40pm. *Psycho* 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.40pm. *Rush Hour* 10pm. *The Siege* 3.40pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 3.50pm, 4pm, 2.40pm, 6.20pm, 7pm, 9.05pm. *What Dreams May Come* 9.20pm.

WEST END

THEATRE WEST END

Ticket availability details are for today, times and prices for the week; running times include intervals. (— Seats at all prices) — Seats at some prices O — Returns only Madness (1); Sun, (3); Tue, (4); Wed, (5); Thu, (7); Sat, (8).

ALARMS & EXCURSIONS

Michael Frayn's new comedy about a dinner party which is interrupted by mysterious messages stars Felicity Kendal and Josie Lawrence. Gielgud Theatre, SW1 (0171-494 5065) ♦ Picc. Circ. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, £12.50, 10.30pm, 11.30pm. **ROYAL NATIONAL THEATRE**

Olivier Peter Pan Stephen Oliver's music accompanies the tale of the Boy Who Would Not Grow Up, with Michael Bryant as the Storyteller in rep today 2pm & 7.15pm, 3pm, £7.50-E35. **ROYAL COURT THEATRE**

Amadeus David Suchet stars as Salieri in Peter Shaffer's acclaimed drama. Old Vic The Cut, SE1 (0171-926 7616) BR/B Waterlo. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, £4.20pm, 10.30pm, 11.30pm. **LYTTELTON** Cleo, Camping, Emmanuelle and Dick Terry Johnson's new play looks at the Carry On actors and recreates Sid James, Kenneth Williams and Bob Windsor on stage. In rep tonight 7.30pm, ends 16 Jan. 120 mins.

ANNIE Ray Cooney's riotous story of the naughtily optimistic orphan. Victoria Palace Theatre, SW1 (0181-881 2519) ♦ Picc. Circ. Mon-Sat 8pm, £4.20pm, 10.30pm, 11.30pm. **TURNPIKE LANE CORONET** (0181-881 2519) ♦ Picc. Circ. Mon-Sat 8pm, £4.20pm, 10.30pm, 11.30pm. **UXBRIDGE ODEON** (08705 050007) ♦ Ubrique The Stage 1.40pm, 5.45pm. **WALTHAMSTOW ODEON** (0870-9020424) ♦ Walhamstow Central. *Enemy of the State* 4pm, 6.50pm, 8.15pm. *Psycho* 1.40pm, 3.20pm, 5.05pm, 6.30pm. **WELL HALL** (0181-881 3531) ♦ Corridor Lane Enemy of the State 3pm, 5.45pm. **WATERLOO ODEON** (08705 050007) ♦ South Wimbledon Aut 1.25pm, 3.20pm, 5.25pm, 8.20pm. Little Voice 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 12noon. **THE PARENT TRAP** (0171-494 5065) ♦ Covent Garden/Holborn. **WIGMORE HALL** (0171-881 2519) ♦ Picc. Circ. Mon-Sat 8pm, £4.20pm, 10.30pm, 11.30pm. **WIMBLEDON ODEON** (08705 050007) ♦ South Wimbledon Aut 1.25pm, 3.20pm, 5.25pm, 8.20pm. Little Voice 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 12noon. **THE PARENT TRAP** (0171-494 5065) ♦ Covent Garden/Holborn. **WIGMORE HALL** (0171-881 2519) ♦ Picc. Circ. Mon-Sat 8pm, £4.20pm, 10.30pm, 11.30pm. **WOODFORD ODEON** (08705 050007) ♦ South Woodford. *Enemy of the State* 2.30pm, 5.25pm, 8.20pm. Little Voice 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm. *The Mask* of Zorro 12noon. **THE PARENT TRAP** (0171-494 5065) ♦ Covent Garden/Holborn. **WATERMILL THEATRE**

Corridor Lane 1pm, 3.40pm, 5.45pm, 7.45pm, 9.45pm. *The Siege* 1.40pm, 3.20pm, 5.05pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm. *Star Trek: Insurrection* 1.40pm, 3.20pm, 5.05pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm. **WATERMILL THEATRE**

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